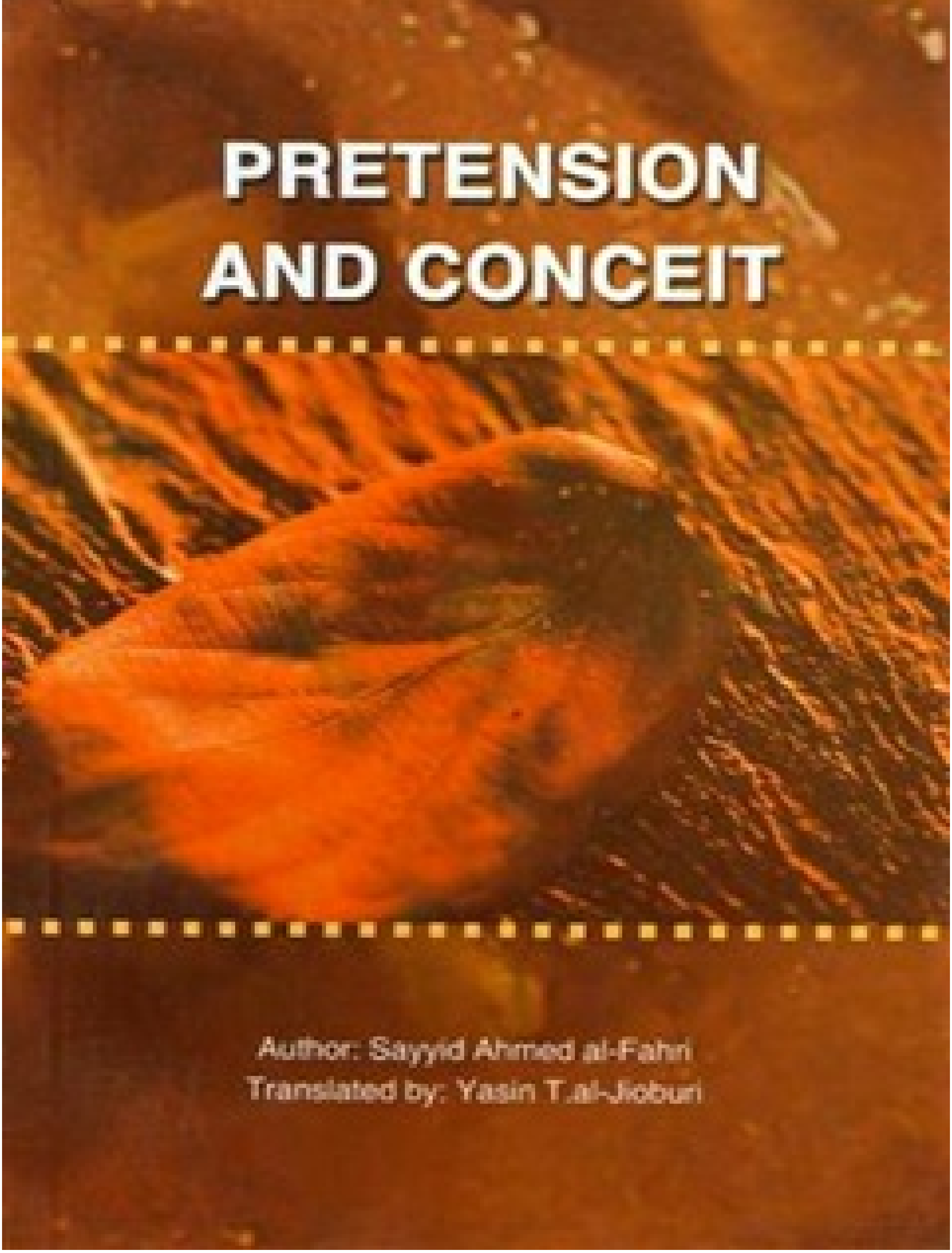


PRETENSION AND CONCEIT

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point

In this book the author uses the Qur'an and Ahadith to discuss the vices of pretension and conceit in detail. He examines their causes and effects, and their different levels, and also explains how one can get rid of them with the help of Islamic teachings.

Publisher's Preface

In The Name of Allāh, The Most Gracious, The Most Merciful

Ansariyan Publications, publishers of quality Islamic literature in various languages, is pleased to present this book to you which is one of the translated works of our brother, Yasin T. al-Jibouri. We have already published a number of books written or translated by al-Jibouri and are pleased to add this one, too, to the list. The first book written by al-Jibouri which Ansariyan published in ۱۴۲۱ A.H./۲۰۰۰ A.D. was Fast of the Month of Ramadān: Philosophy and Ahkām followed by Allāh: The Concept of God in Islam and Kerbala and Beyond. This book is one of his numerous translations.

Our readers often ask us to introduce the authors or translators to them; therefore,

instead of repeating ourselves, we would like to refer them to our Publisher's Preface in Uswat al-Arifeen if they wish to read full details about the translator. Here, we would like :to give you just a brief idea about him

Al-Jibouri was born in Baghdad, Iraq, in ١٩۴۶ and lived most of his life in holy al-.Kadhimiyya city

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He obtained his B.A. in English on June ٣٠, ١٩٦٩ from the College of Arts, Baghdad University, and his M.A. in English from (then) Atlanta University (now Clark-Atlanta University), Atlanta, Georgia, on December ٢٠, ١٩٧٨, and in March of ١٩٨٨ a Certificate with Honors in Microprocessors and Microcomputers from N.R.I. of Washington, D.C. in addition to three certificates in electronics and programming, including advanced .programming, writing more than ١٠٠ programs

He taught English as a second language at high schools in Iraq, a vocational institute in Saudi Arabia, and a University in the U.S. He edited and revised three English translations of the Holy Qur'ān: ١) by S.V. Mir Ahmed Ali, ٢) by A. Yusuf Ali, and ٣) by M.H. Shakir. He also edited several newsletters and magazines, including Middle East Business Magazine, a high quality business magazine headquartered in Arlington, Virginia, U.S.A., of which he became Senior Editor. Among the books he edited are: Socio-Economic Justice with Particular Reference to Nahjul-Balagha, A Biography of Leaders of Islam and Your Kalima .and the Savior

He is the first person ever to translate works of the martyred economist Imam Ayatullāh Muhammad Bāqir al-Sadr such as: Contemporary Man and the Social Problem, A General Outlook at Rituals, The General Bases of Banking in the Muslim Society, and What Do You Know About Islamic Economics? The second title only is available with the U.S. Library of Congress in Washington, D.C., U.S.A. He also translated and/or published numerous titles; :among them are

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A Biography of Muhammad Bāqir al-Sadr, The Form of Islamic Government and Wilāyat al-Faqeeh, About the World Political Situation From a Muslim's Viewpoint, Our Faith and A Biography of Imam al-Rida by the late Shaikh Muhammad Jawad Fadlallah, in addition to .a large number of political tracts, pamphlets, translations, and newsletters

:His translated works include the following

,The first four volumes of the series titled Al-Islam Risālatuna(١

Al-Muraja`āt: A Shi`i-Sunni Dialogue, the first authentic English translation of Al-(٢ ,Muraja'at by Imam Sayyid Sharafuddeen Sadrud-Deen al-Musawi

,Al-Shi`a hum Ahl al-Sunnah by Dr. Muhammad al-Tijani al-Samawi(٣

.Al-Maqtal (the martyrdom epic of Imam Husain) by Abd al-Razzaq al-Muqarram's book(۴

He also translated the following titles originally authored in Arabic by Rachad el-Moussaoui: Best Month, Best Night; The Book of Istikhāra; Weapon of the Prophets; Miracles of the Holy Qur'ān; and The Great Names of Allāh (Asmā' Allāh al-Husna). These .titles do not carry the Translator's name, however

He translated ٢ books by the late Grand Ayatullāh Muhammed al-Shirazi: ١) Canon: A .Glimpse at the Islamic Law and ٢) The Pathway to an Islamic Revival

He wrote several articles for Islamic Monitor, bulletin of the Islamic Research Information .Center

:He has written eight books

Volume One of his autobiography titled Memoirs of a Shi`a Missionary in America: Two (١ ,Decades of Da`wah

,Fast of the Month of Ramadān: Philosophy and Ahkām(٢

,The Ninety-Nine Attributes of Allāh (٣

,Mary and Jesus in Islam (۴

Allāh: The Concept of God in Islam (٥,

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Kerbala and Beyond

He was quite active in Islamic Da'wa work in the United States. He founded the Islamic Society of Georgia, Inc. (Atlanta, Georgia) in ۱۹۷۳, the Islamic Revival Movement in ۱۹۸۰, the International Islamic Society of Virginia, Inc. in ۱۹۸۲, and the Iraq News Monitor in ۱۹۹۲. .Edited Islamic Affairs newsletter from January ۱۹۷۴ – June ۱۹۸۹

On September ۳, ۲۰۰۳, he returned to his homeland and resumed living in al-Kadhimiyya where he has so far translated five books one of which is this title in addition to Kashf al-Reeba an Ahkam al-Gheeba by Sheikh Taqi ad-Dīn Ibraim son of Ali al-`Āmili, Al-Sirāj: The Lantern (towards the Path of Allāh) by Sheikh Hussain bin Ali bin Sadiq al-Bahrāni and The Truth about the Shi'ah Ithna-Asheri Faith by As'ad Wahid al-Qasim. All these books .are available with Ansariyan

We solicit your comments about these and other books which we publish, and surely your .opinion counts with us

Ansariyan Publications

Introduction

In the Name of Allāh, the most Gracious, the most Merciful

Praise to Allāh Who knows the inner thoughts, Who tests the conscience, Who encompasses everything; His is the power and dominance over everything; blessings and salutations to the one who brought the glad tidings, the warner, the shining light, .Muhammad, the master of messengers, and upon his progeny, the good ones, the pure

The human heart, whereby man is granted distinction over all creation, is like a mirror: It is affected by what it receives of contemptible effects of ugly norms of conduct and

wrongdoings. If the effects are praiseworthy, the heart's mirror becomes clearer, shinier, more illuminating, so much so that in it the reality of the truth becomes glittering, the truth about what is hidden from the beings becomes revealed, and the truth of the matter .sought in the creed becomes obvious

It is to such an intellect that the Master of the Faithful, peace be with him, refers when he says the following: "O servants of Allāh! The one who is the most loved by Allāh from among His servants is one who is assisted by Allāh against his own self (nafs), so he is somber, outfitted with fear, the light of guidance shining in his heart," till he says, "So he, ."with regard to conviction (imān), is like sun rays

This is the heart that, upon the mention of Allāh, the most Exalted, the most Great, becomes fearful, and when His verses are recited, they increase its conviction and in it ,remembrance settles. Allāh Almighty has said

.(Indeed, in the remembrance of Allāh do hearts find rest" (Qur'ān, ١٣:٢٨..."

If the effects are contemptible, they are like a dark smoke that rises to the heart's mirror, and it keeps piling up time and over again till the entire page of the heart is blackened, so it is totally dark. It becomes stamped with predomination, veiled from Allāh Almighty. The ,most Praised One has said

But the stain of the (ill) that they do is on their hearts! Truly they will"

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.(be veiled from (the light of) their Lord that Day" (Qur'ān, ۸۳:۱۴-۱۵

,The Almighty has also said

Is it not a guiding (lesson) to those who inherit the earth after its (previous) residents," that, if We so willed, We could punish them (too) for their sins, and seal up their hearts so .(that they could not hear?" (Qur'ān, ۷:۱۰۰

Thus, He makes a connection between hearing and stamping on the hearts, stamping with the sins. Al-Kulaini, may Allāh be pleased with him, cites on p. ۲۷۳, Vol. ۲, No. ۲۰, of his work Al-Kāfi, Zurārah citing Abū Ja'far, peace be with him, saying, "Every servant of Allāh has a white spot in his heart. When he commits a sin, blackness will enter into the white spot. If he repents, the blackness disappears, but if he keeps committing sins, the blackness keeps spreading till it covers the entire whiteness. Once it covers the whiteness, this individual will never go back to righteousness" It is the meaning of this :verse

,(But the [black] stain of the (ill) that they do is on their hearts" (Qur'ān, ۸۳:۱۴"

:and perhaps the meaning of this narrative may bring to memory this verse

Thus does Allāh seal up the heart of every arrogant and obstinate transgressor" (Qur'ān," .(۴۰:۳۵

So, think about it and ponder. He, peace be with him, is also quoted as having said, "Hearts are of three types: a heart that is turned upside down, knowing no good: It is the heart of an

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apostate (kāfir), a heart that has a black spot, goodness and evil in it wrestle with each other; whichever wins overtakes him, and an open heart; in it there is a lamp that shines; its light never goes out till the Day of Judgment: It is the heart of a believer." He says "till the Day of Judgment" because this heart does not disintegrate when the body ."disintegrates; obedience to Allāh polishes the heart, while disobeying Him blackens it

So, if the deeds are righteous and the rituals accepted, they have to bear an impact on the clarity of the heart, its noor and shine. The soundness of deeds, especially the rituals, has to meet the condition of being complete in their parts and meeting their conditions as .well as undertaken exclusively for the sake of seeking nearness to Allāh Almighty

If the deed lacks these conditions, when it lacks some of its parts or conditions, or if it is insincere, it may not instill noor into the heart, nor does it bear any impact on the heart's clarity and shine. When we see in ourselves and in our hearts that performing the rituals is not having any effect on our hearts, when we sense no noor for them within nor any effect without, although most or all of our worship meets the first condition, being inclusive of the parts and outwardly conditions, i.e. outwardly sound..., yet they lack the noor..., it is so on account of their lacking sincerity for

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Allāh Almighty; otherwise, why do not we put an end to committing what is abominable ?and detested

Why do the springs of wisdom not flow from our hearts although the sacred tradition determines that they must flow in forty days according to his statement, peace be with him, "One who is sincere to Allāh for forty mornings, the springs of wisdom flow from his heart to his tongue"? And why is Satan playing games with us, interfering in all our affairs, :although he had made a pledge to Allāh Almighty not to tempt the sincere ones

Then, by Your might, I will put them all in the wrong, except Your servants among them, " (?the sincere and purified ones" (Qur'ān, ٣٨:٨٢-٨٣

This is only the outcome of our deeds being conjoined with insincerity. And I do not mean, when I mention sincerity being absent from our deeds, the high levels of sincerity that are among the characteristics of the friends of Allāh, those who are near to Him, for we have no share of such sincerity..., but I mean the lowest of its levels, that is, it contains no pretension which nullifies the deeds. If we sift through our deeds and rituals, we will find out that Satan has penetrated most of them and spoiled our deeds, as we will, God willing, .explain

Any deed undertaken in order to make a show is null and void according to the Sharī`a and has no bearing, no impact, no effect. We have to correct

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our deeds from this side and rid them of pretension for it is shirk in Allāh Almighty in adoration according to his statement, peace be with him, "Every form of pretension is .("shirk (polytheism

Since shirk has many branches, and since Satan and the nafs in this regard have hidden traps which nobody except a discerning critic can detect, this summary is written to seek benefit from statements by scholars of the hereafter and professors of ethics, especially the greatest professor, Imām al-Khomeini, may Allāh preserve his shade, pleading to the Master, the most Great, to make it exclusively for the sake of pleasing Him and not to let Satan has any share in it so it may be a means for salvation and a tool for forgiveness; .surely Allāh grants success; surely He provides help

Pretension

In the Name of Allāh, the most Gracious, the most Merciful

Praise to Allāh, Lord of the Worlds, greetings unto Muhammad and his Progeny and the .sincere servants of Allāh

:Pretension According To The Qur'ān

So, woe unto the worshippers, who are neglectful of their prayers, those who (want .١ only) to be seen (by men), but they refuse (to supply even) neighborly needs. (Qur'ān, (١٠٧:۴-٧

And they have been commanded no more than this: To worship Allāh, offering Him .٢ (sincere devotion, being true (in faith). (Qur'ān, ٩٨:۵

(Is it not to Allāh that sincere devotion is due? (Qur'ān, ٣٩:٣ .٣

Whoever expects to meet his Lord, let him do righteous deeds, and in the worship of his .۴ Lord, admit

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(no one as (His) partner. (Qur'ān, ١٨:١١٠

:Pretension in traditions

In his book Al-Kāfi, according to isnād to Yazīd ibn Khalīfah, the author cites the .١ narrator saying that Abū Abdullāh, peace be with him, said to him, "Every form of pretension is shirk. One who works for the sake of pleasing people is to be rewarded by ."them, and one who works for Allāh will be rewarded by Allāh

was once asked, (ص) In his book Al-Āmāli, al-Sadūq says that the Messenger of Allāh .٢ said, "Salvation then will be in (ص) "What will bring us salvation in the life to come?" He not attempting to deceive Allāh so He lets you be deceived, for anyone who tries to deceive Allāh will himself be deceived. Conviction will be extracted out of him, and he ."actually deceives none but his own self

said, "He acts (ص) He was asked, "How can anyone try to deceive Allāh?!" The Prophet upon what Allāh has enjoined, then by the same action he tries to impress others. So, fear Allāh and avoid pretension, for it is shirk against Allāh. A pretender will be called upon the Day of Judgment with four names: O Kāfir (apostate)! O Fājir (debauchee)! O Ghādir (deceiver)! O Khāsir (loser)! Your deeds are void, your reward is cancelled, and there is nothing good for you this Day; so, seek your rewards from those for whom you used to !"work

In Wasā'il al-Shī'ah by al-Hurr al-`Āmili, quoting Qurb al-Isnād, through isnād traced to .٣ the

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has said, "One who makes (ص) the Messenger of Allāh , (ع) Commander of the Faithful himself look good by doing what Allāh loves then in secrecy defies Allāh by doing what ."Allāh hates will find Allāh angry with him in the Hereafter, holding him in contempt

This sacred tradition will later be explained, so wait. There are many such traditions, and .what we have stated must suffice and serve the memory

"Meaning of "Pretension

The word "riyā" (pretension) is derived from "ru'ya" (vision, eyesight), just as the word "sum'a" (reputation) is derived from "sam`'" (hearing). In essence, the meaning of pretension is that one seeks, through the medium of his good deeds, distinction and prominence in the hearts of people, even if this can be achieved through good deeds. But the term, according to the Sharī`a, requires this intention to materialize in the rituals and in the deeds intended for seeking nearness to Allāh as a condition for their acceptance .according to the Sharī`a

Thereupon, the meaning of pretension is "doing what is supposed to be a deed for the sake of nearness to Allāh with the intention to seek a status among the people". The leading imām, al-Khomeini, may Allāh prolong his shade, has made a statement in this regard. Its gist is that pretension, according to him, is not exclusively relevant to an act of worship but is broader than that. He says, "Be informed that pretension is showing people some good deeds, or commendable attributes, or true beliefs in

order to achieve a status in their hearts and fame among them that he is kind, sound of belief, trustworthy and pious without truly seeking to please the Almighty. This :materializes in certain levels

:First Level

It has two degrees: In the first degree, one shows off the true beliefs and divine branches of knowledge so he will be famous for being pious and will have a status in people's hearts such as he may say, "I see none effective in existence save Allāh," or he may say, "I rely on none save Allāh". Or he may identify himself as being associated with true beliefs by either affiliation or reference. This type of pretension is the most widely circulated. For example, when either reliance on Allāh or accepting His decree is discussed at a gathering, the pretender will then sigh or move his head to beckon that he .is on the path of those who rely on or who accept the decree of Allāh

In the second degree, he clears himself of or puts it above false beliefs, seeking .distinction and prominence in the hearts whether explicitly or implicitly

:Second Level

It, too, has two degrees: In the first degree, one demonstrates the commendable attributes and the virtuous faculties seeking distinction and prominence. In the second degree, he holds himself as being above contradictions, clearing himself of contemptible .attributes and foul faculties for this same purpose

:Third Level

.It is the pretension known to exist among the faqīhs, may Allāh be pleased with them

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It, too, has these two degrees: one of them is doing what is required by the Sharī`a or legislated adoration, or doing what is rationally commendable seeking showing them off to people and winning their hearts in a wider sense than doing so through what is meant by pretension when doing the same, or in the way he does it, or in meeting its condition or a portion thereof according to what they have stated in the books of fiqh (jurisprudence). The second is leaving a job for the same." This is what the imām, may Allāh prolong his .shade, describes while classifying norms of pretension

A scholar of the hereafter has mentioned another classification for pretension after having defined pretension, saying it is what the servants of Allāh fare with obedience to :Him, dividing it into five types

pretension about the faith with the use of the body .۱

pretension about the faith through the norms of clothing, outfitting, form and attire .۲

pretension in speech .۳

pretension in action .۴

pretension in companionship and in friendliness with the public .۵

This division, though not logical, is backed by examples for each explaining the deceptions of the nafs. They benefit those who wish to purify their souls and reform them so they may be guided against the ways of the soul's deceptions. We, therefore, would like to :mention some of them here with our own editing

The first type, that is, the pretension about the faith with the use of bodily parts, means showing thinness, weakness and

yellowish facial complexion so one is thus deceived about the extent of exertion, the deep concern about the creed and the overwhelming fear of the Hereafter. He wants to give the impression that he is eating very little, his face is yellow because of spending the night .vigilant, greatly exerting himself and feeling depressed out of concern for the religion

He also makes a pretense by leaving his hair untidy so he may give the impression that his mouth is deeply involved in religious uttering [rather than in eating and drinking]; he has no time to tidy his hair. These causes, no matter how they appear, give the people the impression about these matters, so the pretender's soul is at ease when he gives such an .impression; so, his soul prompts him to demonstrate them so that it may be restful

You may see this pretender lowering his voice when he speaks so that the listener may be duped into believing that lowering the voice is due to abundance of adoration, or his lips are withered because of continuous fast. It is for this reason that Christ, peace be with him, said, "When one of you fasts, let him oil his head, tidy his hair and use kohl (arras) for his eyes." The reason why he, peace be with him, said so was out of fear of .Satan insinuating pretension

As regarding pretension coming from clothing and appearance, it is when one does not tidy his hair, lowers his head when

he walks more than what is required by modesty and dignity, when he is quiet in movement, keeping the mark of prostration on the forehead and perhaps wearing an outfit that is not clean so he may be counted among the sincere worshippers of Allāh.

Clothing pretenders are various classes: Some of them seek a status among the people of righteousness and piety by showing off asceticism. One may wear a worn out garment so he may be regarded by them as an ascetic and lives in the society in this attribute. The mark of his pretension is that if he is asked to wear an average clean garment like that worn by the righteous predecessors, it will be very hard for him to do so, and it will be as if he is being led to his slaughter because he is afraid people will say that he is tired of being an ascetic and returned to his old self, desiring the life of this world.

Another class seeks acceptance among the people of righteousness and the people of the world such as businessmen and the elite. These poor folks feel embarrassed and alarmed because if they wear luxurious clothes, the ascetics and the servants of Allāh will reject them. And if they wear old worn out clothes, they will perhaps fall in the eyes of the people of this world and in the eyes of the rich. They want to combine between the acceptance of the people of faith and

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that the people of this world; therefore, they choose clothes the weaving and the fabric of which are valuable, hence the value of their clothes is similar to that of a rich man's .clothing, but its form and color give the impression that it is worn by the righteous

With this trick they seek acceptance by both groups. The mark of pretension of this group is that if they are asked to wear old clothes that are in good shape, it will be very hard for them to do so out of their fear the righteous people will tell them that they desired the life of this world. And if they are asked to wear what is coarse or worn out, it will be a harsh undertaking due to their fear of losing face among the rich. Each of these classes sees its status represented in a particular way of dressing; it is hard for him to move to something less or something more or to anything else, even if it is permissible or preferred by the .Sharī`a

As for pretension in speech, it is when a pretender keeps repeating pieces of wisdom: He keeps reminding others in order to win people's hearts. He memorizes words of wisdom, traditions and biographies in order to use them in his debates to show the richness of his knowledge and to point out to his extreme care about the conditions of the pious ancestors. He chooses statements containing vocal letters, or at least verbal

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ones, so he may move his tongue in a gathering of the people. If the statement contains both types of letters, it will be preferred by him.

During a public meeting, he busies himself with repeating holy statements although if he sits alone for hours, his lips do not utter anything of the mention of Allāh. His denunciation of what is detestable is intense before the public; he expresses sorrow for people committing transgressions, and he is amazed at how they dare to disobey Allāh. Thus, people may get the impression that he does not commit a transgression, nor does he have the courage to undertake it. The branches of speech pretension exhaust a great deal to mention.

As regarding pretension in action, such as a praying person showing off how he prolongs his standing during the prayers reciting lengthy chapters, especially if he is an imām of a group, so that people may recognize his distinction and that he has memorized many chapters of the Holy Qur'ān, and they envy him for standing so long during his adoration. If he prays at home or outside it, where he is not seen by anyone, he will be satisfied with reciting the shortest chapters. His condition is the same during solemnity and submission as well as lengthy prostration during the prayers. When he is seen by the public, he does so more than during his solitude especially if he is the imām of a group.

He goes overboard in showing off his

deep adoration, prolonging his prostration especially during the "sajdat al-shukr", thanksgiving prostration, after the prayer ritual. He may remain prostrating till all those praying behind him disperse. The same applies to the rest of his acts of adoration such as .fast, charity and pilgrimage

Even when he walks to take care of a need, he may hurry, but if one of the men of religion sees him, he immediately reverts to solemnity, to lowering his head for fear of being accused of haste and of being less solemn. When the man of religion is out of sight, the pretender resumes his pace. A pretender may pray by himself without full concentration, but if someone sees him, he goes back to his full concentration. When he is in a place of public worship, he states that full attention must be allotted to the Almighty. He wants people to hear him say so in order that he may be counted among the true servants of .Allāh, the righteous ones

Among them is one who is immersed in pretension: When he catches himself off-guard, he feels so shy that his gait, when alone, is similar to that when he is seen by people, fearing people may get to notice the variation in his gait, so he forces himself to walk properly, humbly, when alone so he may get used to it and it will be the same when he is alone and when in public, and he will not need to shift from one

to the other when seen by people. He thus thinks that he gets rid of pretension, being unmindful of the fact that his pretension has intensified, his scheme has doubled, and his pretension has crept into his solitude as well. When he walks properly when alone, so he will do likewise before people, he does not do that out of fear of Allāh, nor feeling shy of .Him

Since the source of what is hidden about pretension can be explained through another example, let us do so to the believing brothers. A pretender may agree that his reason, the hidden messenger or the angel in charge of good deeds according to the traditions, inspires him that prayers, for example, which are performed in public are more profound and contain more remembrance of Allāh than in the prayer ritual performed at home distantly from the public eyes, and there is no doubt that such a prayer is null due to pretension creeping into it, it is then that Satan or the nafs may interfere in the subject and set up a hidden trap of which a praying person is rarely aware, which is: The nafs and Satan oblige the believer to pray in solitude, too, with full devotion and mentioning lengthy supplications so this will be regarded as the answer for reason or for the angel that "My prayer in public is the same as I perform it in solitude; so, what evidence do you have against me that my prayer is

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?that of a pretender

Is not my prayer before people the same as it is in my home? Actually, the prayer which I perform in solitude may be more profound and containing more lengthy praises than it is outside the house and before the public eyes." But the poor man is heedless of Satan, and the nafs has not left a sound prayer for him, not even in solitude or in the depth of the night. In other words, among the signs of an action not being pretentious is that the action witnessed by people is similar to it in solitude, not the action in solitude being .similar to that performed publicly; so, think about it

As for pretension in socializing, it is when someone makes arrangements so that scholars may visit him, and so that it will be said that so-and-so is visited by so-and-so, or that he is respected by scholars. It will be said that the theologians seek the blessings of God by visiting him. And if he can find a way so businessmen and the elite, too, visit him, let it be so in order that people may say that so-and-so is respected by all classes of scholars, .worshipers and the folks of the life of this world

If he cannot attract them to visit him, he himself goes to visit the scholars and worshippers so it will be seen that he met many scholars and worshippers from whom he benefited, so he brags about them. If the

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kind ones and the righteous are mentioned, he sighs and says, "Yes! How often I have met these kind ones, served them and was glad to be at their service!" so the listeners may get to know that serving the friends of Allāh and the righteous does not go unrewarded by them, that they must definitely have overwhelmed him with their .goodness

Among the pretenders is one who is satisfied with people thinking well of him. Many a worshipper isolates himself from the public and stays at home, feeling elated that people think well of him. Although he no longer covets their wealth, he likes prominence and people thinking well of him; this has a sweet taste, as stated in its right place; it is the sort of power and perfection, though it quickly vanishes, and nobody is deceived by it save the !ignorant ones, but most people are

Had people come to know the truth, they would have thought ill of him, their belief in him would have departed, and they thought that he committed something ugly by thus sitting at home due to his mind being confused. He was not satisfied with Allāh's knowledge of his innocence and the purity of his heart; rather, he is deeply grieved. He may abandon isolation and adoration and comes out to the society. This poor man, though having no desire for people's funds nor for their companionship, looked forward to their good thoughts of him, their praise of him, so the love

for prominence set its roots in his heart, and his poor soul felt satisfied with this much .pleasure

This is a collection of the things that entertain pretenders' minds. They all seek prominence and recognition in the hearts of people. Pretension has other sources the mention of which is lengthy, and one who is loved by Allāh may feel alert about them, for .if Allāh loves a servant of His, He enables him to see his own faults

The Ugliest Degree of Pretension

Imām al-Khomeini, may Allāh prolong his shade, has said, "Be informed that the most serious degree of pretension and the most detrimental, according to the principles of beliefs and theological branches of knowledge, and the one the darkness to the heart of which is the most intense of all other types of showing off is this: If the pretender does not believe in what he shows off, he is still among the hypocrites whom Allāh forewarned of being kept in hell forever. His is perdition and eternal loss, and his torment is the most .severe

And if he believes in that matter, but he does so seeking a status and distinction in the hearts of people, although he is not a hypocrite, such a conduct requires the light of conviction to abandon his heart so it would be replaced by the darkness of disbelief. This is so because this person, although he was initially committing hidden shirk, demonstrated to people the divine branches of knowledge and the true beliefs that have to

be purely for seeking the pleasure of Allāh, their owner is the true Holy One, the most Glorious, but he let someone else be a partner in them: He let Satan have a hand in .dealing with them

Such an action comes from the heart(١) seeking to please someone else other than Allāh. says in a sacred tradition recorded in Al-Kāfi, "Every type of pretension is kufr (ع) He (apostasy)." But both this dark inner-self and bad trend drag one to have a heart dedicated to anyone except Allāh. The darkness of this vice becomes a means to gradually get one out of this life having no sound conviction (imān). The erroneous conviction becomes an image without a meaning, a body without a soul, a peal with a pith, and it does not qualify it to be accepted by the most Exalted One as referred to in a sacred tradition in Al-Kāfi where Ali ibn Sālim is quoted as having said that he heard Abū saying that the Almighty said, "I am the best partner; whoever brings (ع) Abdullāh another partner besides Me in an action, I shall not accept it. I accept what is purely done ."for My sake

It is well known that if the inner actions are not purely for the sake of pleasing Allāh, the Almighty does not accept them; He does not look at them; rather, He refers them to the other partner, the one/ones for whom the action was done in order to show

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We will explain, by the Will of Allah, how conviction is an act of the heart [of the - ١ .[innermost

off to him/them. Thus, the inner actions will be dedicated to that person, and they get the .(pretender out of the limit of shirk into mere apostasy (kufr

Actually, it can be said that this person, too, is among the group of hypocrites. Just as shirk was hidden, so was his hypocrisy. The poor pretender fooled himself into thinking that he is a believer, but he started as a mushrik and ended up as a hypocrite, and he has to taste the torment tasted by the hypocrites. Woe unto one who is dragged into !hypocrisy

Explaning how Conviction is not Knowledge

Then Imām al-Khomeini, may Allāh prolong his shade, explained that conviction is not synonymous with knowledge. He said, "Be informed that conviction is not the same as knowledge about Allāh, knowledge about His Unity, about the rest of His fixed attributes of perfection and great negative ones, knowledge about the angels, the books, the messengers and the Last Day, for perhaps one may be knowledgeable about all these matters without being a believer. Satan, too, knows about these levels of knowledge as .much as I know, and as much as you know, yet he is kāfir

He also believes in the principle and knows that Allāh is the Creator because he says, "You created me of fire and created him of dust." And he knows about the Hereafter, too, because he says, "Grant me a respite till the Day that they are brought back to life." Yet, despite all these qualities, he is kāfir

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according to the clear Qur'ānic verse that says, "... and he was among the unbelievers." The secret in this is that conviction is an act of the heart. If it is not brought into being, .there is no presence for conviction

If anyone gets to know something according to the dictates of the rational evidence, or according to the judgment necessitated by the creed, the heart has to surrender to such knowledge, so the action comes from the heart as a manifestation of such surrendering and submission, a sort of acceptance, so he may be a believer. One's perfection is feeling comfortable [with such surrendering] as referred to by this sacred verse: "'Then do you not believe?' He said, 'Yes, I do! But so that my own understanding may be satisfied'" .((Qur'ān, ٢:٢۶٠

When the light of conviction in the heart is strong, it is followed by feeling comfortable with it. All of this is different from knowledge. Our minds can realize something through evidence, but our hearts did not surrender to it. Thus, knowledge becomes useless. For example, if you realize through your mind that a dead person cannot harm anyone, even if all the dead in the world get together, they collectively have neither sense nor motion in as much as a mosquito, and that all the physical and spiritual forces have already .departed

But since this meaning does not transcend the limit of knowledge, and since it is not acceptable by the heart, and the heart did

not surrender to reason, you cannot spend one night with a dead person in a dark night, and you will be afraid of his corpse. But if the heart surrenders to reason and accepts such a judgment from reason, you will have no problem sleeping in the company of a dead person. Also, if you do that, and you repeat spending the night with a dead person, .the heart will then surrender to reason and will not be afraid of the dead

It will then be known that surrendering is the line of the heart, and it is different from knowing, which is the line of reason. It is then that man can prove, through rational evidence, the presence of the Maker, the Exalted One, that He is One and Only, that there is an afterlife, in addition to other true beliefs. But conviction is not a description of these beliefs, nor is one who believes in them is counted among the believers; rather, he is in .the company of the unbelievers, the hypocrites or the polytheists

The point is that this day, a covering has been placed on the eye of his heart, and he does not have the angelic vision and the kingly eye, so he does not realize this meaning. But if the innermost is revealed, the truly divine power comes up, nature is rendered into ruin, and the truth stands tall, it is then that you feel you were not a believer in Allāh. The said

judgment for reason was not related to conviction(١). So, Dear One, unless you write down the blessed statement saying "There is no god except Allāh" with the pen of reason on the tablet of the pure heart, you are not a [truly] believer in the Unity of Allāh Almighty.

If this good divine word enters one's heart, the heart's submission will be directly to Allāh Almighty. The one who has such a heart does not then see any other human being as bearing any impact on the domain of the Truthful One, nor does he expect any favor or distinction from anyone else. He will not then seek a station and fame among people. The heart will not be pretentious or deceptive. When you see pretension in the heart, be informed that your heart has not submitted to reason, nor has the light of conviction shone in it. You will see someone else other than Allāh Almighty as the influential god; you will then be in the company of the polytheists, or hypocrites, or apostates."

Having explained the levels and basic origin of pretension, the Imām, may his shade endure, states a terse admonishment in which he brings to memory the awful outcome of pretension. In it, there is a reminding for one who has a heart, or who does listen and stands as a witness.

The master of divine sciences, Imām Khomeini, may his shade be prolonged, says the following: "O pretender who has submitted the true beliefs and divine branches

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١- It must also be known that committing a group of acts of disobedience to Allah is not in sync with belief in the Hereafter and in the Judgment Day; rather, doing them is not in harmony with the belief that one is in the company of the Truth, the most Exalted One, as referred to often in the cherished supplications. One of the latter exists in the supplication of Abū Hamzah al-Thumali: "If anyone today looks at my sins other than You, I would not have done it. Had I feared the speedy penalty, I would have avoided it." The solution for this confusion is sought in the statement of the imām, may his shade be prolonged, in this regard.

of knowledge to the enemy of Allāh, namely Satan, thus giving the matters that are exclusively related to Allāh, Praise to Him, to someone else. You have taken out the celestial lights that used to shine in the soul and the heart and were the capital of salvation, eternal happiness, the fountainhead of the divine communion, the seeds for the .company of the Loved One in the desolate darkness

You have permitted yourself to suffer eternal perdition, the capital of the distance from the holy place of the Loved One. You have shunned the meeting with the Almighty, the Truth.... So, be prepared for darkness beyond which there is no light at all, for hardship beyond which there is no ease, for ailments that have no cure, for death that has no life and for a fire that springs out of the depth of the heart and the domain of the soul, burning the domain of the body in a way which neither my heart nor yours can ever imagine, as Allāh Almighty has already informed us in His Revealed Book and which He described in this sacred verse: "(It is) the Fire of (the Wrath of) Allāh kindled (to a blaze) .(which mounts (right) to the hearts" (Qur'ān, ۱۰۴:۷-۸

The Fire of Allāh overwhelms the hearts and burns them. No fire can burn a heart other than Allāh's Fire. So, if someone's Unity instinct, which is instilled by Allāh, departs from ,someone and is replaced by polytheism and apostasy

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he will have none to intercede on his behalf with the Almighty, and he will be lodged into torment forever. And what a torment it is! It is a torment that originates from the Almighty's subduing and divine wrath.

O dear one! Do not expose yourself to the wrath of the Almighty on account of a false whim and a limited popularity among His weak servants. Such whim has neither any impact nor fruit save regrets and sighs. When your ties are cut off from this world, which is like a shop and a place for gain, and when your deeds come to an end, regrets and sighs will not avail you, and you will not be able to return and retract.

Degrees Of Pretension's Objectives

Some scholars of the hereafter have said that pretension, with regard to one's goals behind pretending, for surely the pretender has goals, is of three degrees:

The First Degree

It is the most intense and the most serious: One's goal is to commit a transgression against the will of Allāh and to reach what is prohibitive, such as he makes a show of his acts of adoration, or feigns piety and godliness through many supererogatory acts of adoration. He avoids anything that may bring about people's doubt in his regard. His goal is so that people may recognize his trustworthiness, hence positions in the judicial system, or religious trusts, or wills, or whatever belongs to orphans. He will then take them and keep to himself whatever he can.

Or

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he may be trusted with items, so he takes them and denies having done so, thus reaching his corrupt goals in committing transgressions. One may appear in the attire of the righteous, articulating pieces of wisdom, admonishment, and reminding. Yet his goal is to look good in the eyes of a beautiful woman. Some people may attend meetings of knowledge and remembrance of the Almighty, or even of the Qur'ān, pretending they wish to listen to knowledge and to the Qur'ān while their goal is to look at women, and these pretenders are hated the most by Allāh Almighty because they made obedience to their Lord a ladder to reaching their transgression, using it as a tool, a shop, a .merchandise in their sinning

Close to these, though less in degree, is one who commits a crime of which he is accused, yet he insists on it and wants to keep the charge away from himself, so he feigns piety in order to deny the charge, such as one who denied a trust with him of which people charged him, so he offers charity with the money in order that it will be said he gives away from his money to the poor, so how can it be possible that he seizes the funds belonging ?to others

The likes of such folks are many among the Muslims. Individuals may gather funds that belong to the Muslims by the millions through usury or other illegitimate transactions. One may see that instead

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of returning people's money to them, he offers charity with some of his money, or builds a mosque or a hospital, so that people may see that he is one who builds mosques or hospitals; therefore, how can it be possible that he stretches his hands to people's money ?and possessions

Or one may be charged with having committed a sin with a woman, and Allāh, the most Exalted One, removed the covering from him and exposed him among the people. Instead of resorting to a covering from Allāh, Praise to Him, regretting and pleading to Allāh, Who sways the hearts, to change people's attitude about him, he seeks a means .through pretension, trying to cover his sin with pretension

The Second Degree

It is when his goal is to obtain a permissible worldly gain such as wealth or marriage to a beautiful or distinguished woman, etc., so he feigns grief and keeps himself busy with admonishing and reminding others so that funds may be spent on him. He will then sell more of his merchandise if he is a merchant, a businessman, or among money making folks. Or if he wishes to marry a distinguished woman, such as the daughter of a righteous scholar, he pretends to her father to be a man of knowledge and adoration so .that he may marry him to his daughter

This sort of pretension is prohibitive because it seeks through the means of obedience to Allāh the wares of this lowly life, but it is

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of a lesser degree than the first. What is sought through this pretension is by itself permissible but it is contemptible, and its reality is shirk; the absolute authority is the .privilege of the True One, the Almighty, when it comes to dealing with His servants

Third Degree

The pretender does not seek fortune, wealth, or marriage, but he shows off his adoration for fear people may look at him as if he lacks something; therefore, he is not considered to be among the elite and the ascetics, and he is regarded to be among the commoners, such as one who walks to the congregational prayer services, to mosques, in a hurry, and when people see him, he adjusts his walk and abandons haste although it, at that time, was legitimate. But he abandons it so he may not be labeled as one of those who love .distraction or negligence and not one of the men of eminence

Also, if he is the first to burst laughing or demonstrates merriment, so he is afraid he will be looked down upon with eyes of contempt, he follows it by seeking Allāh's forgiveness and pretends to be sad on its account and says, "How unmindful a human being is! But Allāh knows that if such an individual is left to himself, he would not consider doing so as being too much; rather, he fears he will be looked down upon with contempt and not with respect. He is like one who sees a

group of worshippers offering supererogatory prayers, or making tahajjud, or fasting each Thursday and Monday, as is transmitted about the imām of the nation who ordered the youths (of Hizbollah) to fast both these days, so the man goes along with them for .fear he will be described as lazy and thus is not attributed to the party of Allāh

If he is left alone, he does no such things. And he is like one who endures the thirst on the Day of Arafa, or in days during which fast is highly recommended, so he does not drink water for fear people may get to know that he is not fasting. So, if they think that he is, he abstains from eating as well. Or he may be invited to partake of food, so he abstains in order that he will be perceived as observing the fast. He may openly state that he is fasting or says he has an excuse. Such a pretender combines two contemptible acts: He is .seen by others as fasting, then he is seen as a sincere one and not as a pretender

He is cautious lest he should mention his act of adoration to people for fear he will be seen as a pretender. He, hence, wants to give the impression that he is continuing his act of adoration. If he is obligated to drink, he rushes to remind himself that he has an excuse, either explicitly or implicitly, such as seeking an excuse

because of an ailment that causes him to have an acute need to drink water and stops .him from fasting

Or he may say, "Today, I visited so-and-so who pressured me to eat, so I ate." He may not then say that in connection with his drinking water so that he will not be regarded as seeking an excuse as a pretender, but he perseveres then mentions his excuse casually in his narrative of an incident such as his saying, "So-and-so loves his brethren. He so much loves them to partake of his food. Today, he insisted that I should do that, and I had no choice except to cool his heart." Or he may say, "My mother is weak-hearted, compassionate in my regard. She thinks if I fast one day, I will fall sick, so she does not let ."me fast

Such is the doing of the ills of pretension. It does not jump to articulation except due to the deeply rooted pretension in one's innermost. Similar to this is something which I have seen more than once. Someone says, "I spent the night over the house of so-and-so. During the sahar [pre-dawn] time, I wanted to rise for the tahajjud. But I was concerned the owner of the house might think I was a pretender, so I did not stand for the prayers." Or he may say, "I did not worship during a particular time for fear I would be regarded as ."a pretender

,This poor person sees himself

when he does not pray or worship his Lord, as being sincere to Allāh Almighty, fleeing from pretension whereas in fact he has already fallen into it; both his nafs and Satan have taken control of him. In other words, man in such situations has two states: The first is his fear when he prays in someone's house or in the company of a crowd of people that his prayers may be pretension, yet he knows himself best and his weakness, and that he cannot safeguard his sincerity in public as he used to do in private; in this case, the prayer .is abandoned so one may not fall into pretension

The second is that he is concerned about people considering him as being a pretender, although he feels comfortable that he is not praying pretentiously but purely for seeking nearness to Allāh. In this case, if he abandons a ritual, he will prove that he is a pretender .who does not like people to think anything about him except being sincere

Abandoning the worship in the first case was for the sake of Allāh and in the second for the sake of the nafs and its desires, for the nafs loves its reputation to be good among the people. Such is love for life and eminence. If one who is sincere to Allāh sees in himself a desire to perform a commendable fast, for example, let him do so; he must not pay attention to what others say about or

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think of him. And if he does not find in himself such a desire, he must not fast, and he must .not pay attention to what is said about him. Rely on Allāh and forget about them all

A sincere worshipper does not care about how people look at him or think of him. If he has no desire to fast, and Allāh knows about it, he must not want others to believe something different from what Allāh knows about him, thus confusing them. And if he wishes to fast for the sake of seeking nearness to Allāh, he should contend himself with .Allāh's knowledge, associating none with Him

Scientific Point to Eradicate Pretension from the Theological Imam Al-Khomeini, May Allah Prolong his Shade

He, may Allāh prolong his shade, has said, "We would like to state in this regard something that may be effective in treating this heart disease. According to evidence, revelation and observation, as well as the traditions of the Infallible Ones, peace be with them, and the Book of Allāh, the Great, according to His dominance over all beings, His maintenance of all what needs to be maintained..., the hearts of all the servants are under His control and in the grip of His power. Nobody can fare with the servants' hearts without the permission of the Maintaining One and His evolving authorization. It can never be. Even those who have hearts, too, cannot fare with their hearts without His .permission, the most Exalted One, and His dealing

The Holy Qur'ān informs us of this fact, and so do the

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narratives about Ahl al-Bayt, peace be with them, who stated so by reference, explicitly and implicitly. Allāh, Praise to Him, is the One Who owns the heart and Who fares with it, while you are a weak servant incapable of faring with hearts without the dealing of the Truthful One, the most High. Rather, His will subdues yours as well as that of everything in existence. So, if your pretension is to attract the servants' hearts and attention, to gain respect and status in the hearts, to earn a good reputation..., all these are outside your control; they are under the control of the Truthful One, the most Exalted.

The Lord of Hearts, the One Who owns them, permits them to incline to whoever He wants. And your behavior may result in the opposite of what you want. We have heard about and seen pretenders with two faces, having impure hearts, those whose affair was exposed and who gained the contrary of what they had desired. There is a reference to this in a sacred tradition recorded in Al-Kāfi as transmitted by Jarrah al-Madāini who quotes Abū Abdullāh, peace be with him, saying the following in his explanation of this verse:

"Whoever expects to meet his Lord, let him do righteous deeds and in the worship of his Lord admit no one as (His) partner" (Qur'ān, ١٨:١١٠):

Someone does some good deed not for the sake of Allāh but so people may hold him in high esteem. He loves people to

hear about what he does. Such person is one who associates a partner in the worship of his Lord." Then he said, "No servant does an act of righteousness then time passes by except that Allāh will bring something good out of it. And no servant does something wrong in secrecy and time passes by except that Allāh will bring out something bad out of it for him."

You, my dear one, ought to seek good reputation with Allāh. Plead to the One Who owns the hearts to let the hearts incline towards you. Work for Allāh, and let your deed be purely for His sake, for the most Exalted One will then make you loved by people in this world plus rewards you with good things and eternal blessings in the world of the hereafter. He will then enhance the impression which you leave on people's hearts and make you honored in both this life and in the one to come. But if you are able, through practices and struggles, to rid yourself of this love, too, do so in order that your heart may be pure, your deed in this direction will be sound, your heart will direct itself towards Allāh, your soul will be cleansed and the impurity of the self (nafs) will disappear.

What benefit do you reap from the love of weaklings or from their hatred, or from fame among poor servants of Allāh? Even if we suppose there is a benefit, it will last for

only few days, whereas the outcome of this love could drag you to pretension; so, God forbid, you will then become a polytheist, a hypocrite, or an apostate. And if we suppose that one's [prohibitive] matter in this life will be veiled from the eyes of the people, but in the presence of the divine justice, and in the audience of the righteous servants of Allāh, His great Prophets, those who are close to Him and His angels, he will be exposed, and he will surely bear the impact of shame, finding none to help him. You have no idea what a scandal in that Day it will be and what shame and darkness which none knows save Allāh. It is the Day when the unbeliever will say, "Woe unto me! If only I were (mere) dust!" .((Qur'ān, ۷۸:۴۰

But it will be of no avail to him. You, poor soul, for the sake of partial love and fame, which are of no benefit, among the servants of the Almighty, turned away from these blessings, .lost the Pleasure of Allāh, Glory to Him. You made yourself an object of His wrath

You substituted the deeds whereby you can achieve the abode of honor, the eternal life, the everlasting happiness, life in the highest stations of Paradise... with the darkness of shirk and hypocrisy, and you prepared for yourself the sighs, the regret, the intense torment, becoming a prisoner in Sijjeen as described in a sacred narrative in Al-Kāfi and cited from

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says, "An angel gleefully ascends (ص) Abū Abdullāh, peace be upon him. In it, the Prophet with the news about a deed of a servant. If he ascends carrying reports about the servant's good deed, Allāh, the most Exalted, the most Great, says, 'Deposit it in Sijjeen, for he did not seek My pleasure when he did it.'" I and you, in our condition, cannot imagine Sijjeen, nor can we understand the record of the deeds of the sinners or see the picture of these deeds that are in Sijjeen, but we see their reality when we are .incapacitated and have lost touch with any remedy

So, wake up, my dear one, from your sleep, do awy with heedlessness and laziness, weigh your deeds with the scales of reason before they are weighed in that world. Hold yourself to account before you are held, and rid the mirror of your heart of shirk and hypocrisy and of having two faces. Do not permit your heart to rust with shirk and apostasy lest it should be afflicted with the fire of the Hereafter. Do not let the light of .nature be replaced with the darkness of disbelief

Do not render to loss the nature whereby Allāh created people, do not betray this trust of Allāh, cleanse the heart's mirror so the light of the beauty of the True One shine in it, thus it will be more precious to you than this whole world and everything in it, and the fire of

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divine love will then burn in the heart, burning every love that you have in your heart for anything else, and you will not accept to replace one moment of it with the whole world, and you will enjoy the pleasure of remembrance of Allāh compared to which all animal .pleasures will be nothing at all

If you are not worthy of this station, if these images appear in your eyes to be strange, do not abandon the divine blessings in the world of the Hereafter about which the Holy Qur'ān has informed you as well as the traditions of the Infallible Ones in exchange for attracting the hearts of the beings. Do not lose these rewards, do not deprive yourself of such blissful things for the sake of an imagined fame that lasts few days, and do not trade ...eternal happiness for continuous pain

Call to Sincerity from the Professor of Theology, Imam-Al-Khomeini, May his Shade be Prolonged

He, may Allāh prolong his shade, has said, "Be informed that the real Owner of the domain, the One Who truly grants bounties, the One Who grants us blissful things, having prepared them for us even before we came into this world, prepared the nutritional food that is good and suitable to our weak stomach, the One Who cultures and serves with love as great as mountains, so His service may be obligation-free, with suitable .environment and air, in addition to all His apparent and hidden blissful things

He prepared us for the world of the hereafter and that of the barzakh before we

get there. This Master of blessings wants our hearts to love him, to love His Greatness, with sincerity, and the result of this love will be for our own benefit, too. Despite all of this, we do not listen to His commandment but disobey Him and take a path that does not lead us to His pleasure; so, what a great injustice we have committed! How have we argued ?!with the King of Kings

And the loss is only our own; His domain is not hurt in the least, nor can we get out of His power and authority. It makes no difference to Him whether we believe in His unity or not. If we are knowledgeable about Allāh, fearing Him, pure of souls, all this is for our own good. And if we are unbelievers or polytheists, we only harm our own selves. Allāh is independent of the worlds, of their obedience, sincerity and worship. His domain is not .harmed by our rebellion

Our shirk and hypocrisy do not diminish it. But since He is the most Merciful of those who have mercy, His spacious mercy and great wisdom have required that He leads us to the paths of guidance, the ways of distinguishing goodness from evil, beauty from ugliness, and to show us what causes humanity to slip away, what robs it of happiness, and the .great boon for such guidance belongs to Allāh

The favor belongs to Him for whatever acts of adoration, sincerity and worship we

perform. So long as our visions, and the eyes whereby we can see the barzakh, are not open, we are unable to comprehend this fact. And so long as we in this narrow and dark world, in this dark nature, are shackled with the chains of time, jailed in the dark extended place..., we are unable to realize the great boons that belong to Allāh Almighty, and we cannot imagine the divine blessings that lie in this sincerity, adoration and guidance.

Beware of thinking that we do a favor to the great Prophets of Allāh, or to His honored friends, or to the nation's scholars who are the guides to our happiness and salvation, who have saved us from ignorance, darkness and torment, who invited us to the world of celestial light, happiness, elation and greatness.

They bear the burdens of hardship and exhaustion while educating us so we may be saved from the darkness that lies in false beliefs and compounded ignorance and from the pressures and suffering that are the manifestations of a lowly conduct, from the engulfing fearful images of the ugly deeds, and so we may instead earn the celestial lights, the norms of happiness and elation, the pleasures of the soul, the feeling of restfulness, the huris with large lovely eyes, and the mansions that we cannot possibly imagine.

Our world of this domain, as greatly spacious as it is, cannot bear one single outfit of those of Paradise. These eyes of ours cannot bear to

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see a single hair of the huris with their large lovely eyes. Yet the angelic picture of beliefs and deeds has been realized, through divine inspiration, by the great prophets, especially by the one who had the total revelation, the inclusive constitution, namely the seal of .(ص) prophets

The prophets saw it, heard it, and called us towards it while we, poor souls, are like children who do the opposite of what the wise rule. Rather, humans even call these prophets wrong, argue with them and always do the opposite of what they enjoin. Yet those pure and contented personalities, the good and pure souls, due to their compassion and mercy towards the servants of Allāh, did not fall short in calling upon the ignorant one, pulling them in the direction of Paradise and happiness through any means of power .and wealth, without asking them for any reward at all

was that we be kind to his near in (ص) The only reward asked by the Messenger of Allāh kin. Perhaps the picture of this kindness in the world of the hereafter may manifest itself in the form of the most glittering light for us. This reward is for our own good, too, so it may get us to reach happiness and mercy. Thus, the reward of following the message is :credited for us, and we benefited from it

Say: 'I ask no reward of you: It is (all) in your interest: My reward is due only from Allāh''" .((Qur'ān, ۳۴:۴۷

How

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can we, the poor ones, do them a favor, and what a great benefit do we reap from being sincere to them?! What favor do you vest upon the scholars of the nation, upon the scholar who explains the difficult issues and the rulings, or upon the honored Prophet, or upon the Holy One, the most Great?! Each person, according to his level and station, leads .us towards the path of guidance

Indeed, we owe them so much, too much to be able to reward them in this world, the world that is not at all suitable for rewarding them. Indeed, to Allāh, to His Messenger, :and to His friends belongs the favor just as the Almighty has said

Say: 'Do not count your Islam as a favor to me. Nay! Allāh has conferred a favor on you" when He guided you to the faith, if you are true and sincere. Truly Allāh knows the secrets .(of the heavens and the earth, and Allāh sees well all that you do'" (Qur'ān, ۴۹:۱۷-۱۸

If we are truthful in our claim of belief, the favor belongs to Allāh for having guided us to thus believe. Allāh sees what we do not, and He knows the images of our deeds, of our belief, of our submission to Him in the world of what is unknown to us. As for us, the poor ones, we know none of the truth, so we learn from the one who is knowledgeable about them and feel indebted

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to him, and we follow the scholar and feel indebted to him, and we offer congregational prayers behind the scholar and feel indebted to him, although we owe them without knowing it. Hence, when we feel that we are the ones who do them a favor, such feeling .turns our deeds upside down, hurling them into Sijjeen, rendering them to an utter loss

The Second Level of Pretension

From what we have stated, it is learned from our greatest professor and best teacher of ethics, Imām al-Khomeini, may his shade be prolonged, that [the above-stated level of] pretension occupies in the principles of beliefs the first, the most intense and the ugliest .of all

As for the second level of pretension, it lies in the virtuous demeanors and the commendable ethics. It, too, according to what is stated by the imām, may his shade be prolonged, has two stations: The first is that a person demonstrates the commendable characteristics and the virtuous demeanors in order to attract people's hearts towards him. The second is that he declares he dissociates himself from the contemptible .characteristics and ugly demeanors for the same purpose

Our professor has said the following in this regard: "Pretension in this level, although it does not lie in the intensity of ugliness as is the case with the first station, but after attention is drawn to something that may drag the pretender in this level, too, to what places him in the first level. There is an image for man in the spiritual

world that could be non-human because it is connected to the domain of the nafs and to its faculties. So, if it has virtuous human faculties, these faculties would make your spiritual picture human, if you are gathered in [the form of] these faculties once you do not get out of moderation; the faculties are virtuous when the evil-insinuating nafs does .not play havoc with it, nor the path of the nafs interferes in forming it

Actually, our professor/mentor, may his shade be prolonged, used to say that the scales in the wrongful practice and in the right legitimate practice is actually the path of the nafs or the path of righteousness: If the one treading the path does so seeking what is right, going in the direction of Allāh, his practice is right and legitimate, and Allāh, Praise and Exaltation belong to Him, will help him in his effort according to the text of this sacred :verse

As for) those who strive in Our (cause),We will certainly guide them to Our paths, for") .(truly Allāh is with those who do what is right" (Qur'ān, ۲۹:۶۹

He will thus be attracted towards happiness, abandoning the insinuations of egotism, leaving behind the will of the nafs. It is well known that one who demonstrates to people his good manners and virtuous demeanors is prompted thus by his egotistical impetus, feeling conceited, loving and adoring himself. Loving Allāh can never coexist with egotism. ;Seeing Him can never coexist with seeing the nafs

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.it is simply impossible, a mere fancy

So long as the domain of your presence is represented by your egotism, as you love power, prominence, fame and dominance over Allāh's servants, your faculties can never be virtuous, nor can your manners be divine because the real factor in the domain of your existence is Satan; neither your angelic aspect nor your inner-self reflect those of a human. After the angelic barzakh eye opens, it will portray you not as a human being but, .say, as one of the demons

It is impossible for the divine norms of knowledge and the sound belief in the Unity of the Almighty to exist in a heart that is an abode for the demons. If your domain does not become human, and as long as your heart is not purified of such crookedness, from any form of conceit, your heart will never be an abode for the Truthful One, the Almighty. One qudsi tradition states the following: "My earth has no sufficient room for Me nor my ."heavens, but there is room for Me in the heart of My believing servant

So, there is none in existence that is a mirror reflecting the beauty of the loved One except the heart of a believer. The One Who fares with the believer's heart is the Almighty, not the nafs, and the factor in its existence is the loved One. The heart of a believer is not one of a person who sticks to his view

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no matter what, prattling; the heart of the believer is in the fingers of the most Merciful One, turning it however He pleases. The One who fares with the domain of a human heart .is Allāh. Turning and alternating it is done through the will of Allāh Almighty

You, poor soul, who is worshipping himself, with whose heart Satan and ignorance fare, having put an end to the faring of the Truthful Almighty with your heart, through what belief do you expect to be a source for the manifestation of the Truthful One and of [His] absolute domain? Be informed that as long as you remain thus, as long as this vice, the dominance of the will of the nafs over you, you are a disbeliever in Allāh, treading the path .of the hypocrites even if you imagine yourself as being a Muslim, a believer in Allāh

Wise Admonishment from the Professor of Theology, Imam-Al-Khomeini, May his Shade Last

Wake up from your sleep, dear one, abandon negligence and tardiness, let your eyes abstain from indifferent sleep, and be informed that Allāh Almighty created you for :Himself as the qudsi tradition states

O son of Adam! I created all things for your sake and created you for Myself." In the" [divine] address whereby Moses was honored, the Almighty said, "... And I chose you for .(Myself" (Qur'ān, ۲۰:۴۱

Turn your heart into an abode for Him, as He has also said, "My earth and heavens do not ,have room enough for Me, yet the heart of My believing servant does." So

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you and your heart are among the divine canons. Allāh Almighty is jealous; therefore, beware of daring to cause your own perdition and be exposed to the law of the Truthful .One, the Almighty

Fear Allāh's jealousy lest He should expose you in this world to a scandal which, no matter how hard you try to rectify, you are unable to rectify it. You are within the domain of your own self and in the presence of the honored angels and great prophets, yet you dare to violate the divine canon and the virtuous manners whereby the friends of Allāh try to !imitate Him

You hand them over to someone else other than the Truthful One; you grant your heart to the enemy of the Almighty, committing shirk in your inner-self and in its domain; so, beware lest the Almighty should expose the domain of your own self and expose you before the angels near to Him. Moreover, He will expose you before this world, afflict you with a scandal that can never be rectified, scandalize you with a rift that can never be .sewn together again. Allāh, Glory to Him, covers shortcomings, but He also is jealous

He is the most Merciful of those who show mercy, yet He also is the most tough when it comes to penalizing. He covers faults so long as they do not go overboard. When a fault does, God forbid, due to such a momentous act and ethical scandal, His jealousy overshadows his covering

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as you heard in a sacred tradition. Be aware, then, of all of this and go back to your senses; express your regret to Him for He, the most Exalted One, is Merciful and tries to .help people obtain His mercy

If you return to Him, He will hide your past shortcomings, not acquainting anyone with them, vesting virtue upon you, personifying in you the commendable manners, making you the mirror of His attributes, carrying out your own will in that world; His will is effective in all worlds, according to the following tradition about the people of Paradise: "An angel comes to them [to the residents of Paradise] seeking permission to enter. Once he enters, he will hand them over a letter from Allāh after having conveyed the greeting of the Almighty to them. In the letter there is an address to everyone. Everyone is addressed thus: 'From the Ever-living, the Sustaining Who never dies. I say to a thing BE, ."'and it is, and I have made you this day able to say BE to a thing, and it is

goes on to say that it is then that whatever a resident of Paradise (ص) The Prophet commands, it comes to be(١). The command there will be yours if you want to achieve such a status. If you submit your will to Allāh, He, Praise to Him, will make you the manifestation of His will, faring with the affairs; the domain of creating will be at your disposal in the

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I would like to add to this what the knowledgeable sheikh, who is familiar with the -١ Ishaqi precious stone, one of the precious stones of wisdom, has said: "He creates, through His determination, anything that can have an existence from beyond such determination, while the determination itself keeps safeguarding it." This is recorded on p. ١٢۴ of the Message of Unity by Hassan Zadeh Amuli. The tracing of the narrative in the said book, Al-Futuhāt al-Makkiyya [the Meccan campaigns], Vol. ٢, p. ١٥٠, at the end of .Chapter ٧٣, Query No. ١٥۴, Bulaq Press edition

.Hereafter. This is different from the impossible false authorizing

You, dear one, ought to choose for yourself one of these two matters, for Allāh Almighty is independent of us, of the entire creation, of our sincerity and the sincerity of everyone .and everything in existence

Third Level of Pretension

This is the pretension that is known to be found among jurists, may Allāh be pleased with :them, and it, too, has two degrees

The first degree is that one carries out his action and whatever worship is legislated for him, or through what he deems as rationally commendable, intending thereby to show his acts of adoration to the people and win their hearts, intending to be pretentious through that act of worship or through its method, or condition, or a part thereof, as described by .our fellows in their books of jurisprudence

The second degree is that he abandons a deed in order to reach the same result. The greatest professor of theology, imām al-Khomeini, says the following: "Be informed that pretension in this level is more frequent and common than all other levels because most of us are not qualified for both above-stated levels. In this aspect, Satan does not .intercept our way from that highway

But, since most people are worshippers, upholding the rituals and formal manifestations of adoration, Satan is active here more than anywhere else, and the plots of the nafs in this level are many more. In other words, since most people, according to their quality, ,live in a physical Paradise

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earning stations in the Hereafter through doing good deeds and abandoning bad ones, Satan, too, enters upon them from this door, instilling in their hearts the roots of pretension and deception in their deeds, so much so that branches grow out of them and leaves, substituting their good deeds with bad ones, hurling them into hell and the lower stations through these same rituals and acts of adoration, rendering the means whereby the abode of the Hereafter are built requiring their very destruction, introducing into an act what is supposed to get one in the 'Illiyyeen station to be turned by the angels, according to the command of the Almighty, into one qualifying the individual to be hurled into the inferno. The persons who fit in this level, who have neither rations nor a conveyance for the trip [to the Hereafter], must persist in cultivating themselves fully, and they must not neglect this matter, too, God forbid, lest they should be among the fellows of hell: They lose track of the path to happiness, and the gates of Paradise will be closed before them while those of the fires will be opened." Thus the imām, may his shade .endure, ends his statement

Levels of Pretension from the Aspect of what is Hidden and what is Manifest, a Precise Research in the Issue of

Be informed that pretension, in as far as being manifest or hidden, has several levels. Some levels are obvious, some are more obvious, whereas some others are hidden, and .some are more so

The first level: It is the most obvious level: Someone undertakes an action in order

to show off in a way so as if the need to pretend is not there, he will not do it. It is the most .obvious of its levels and needs no explanation

The second level: It is a little bit more hidden: The pretending side is not initially prompted to undertake the action; rather, the side that urges the origin of the action is the Divine side, the nearness to the Almighty, but the non-divine side intrudes into it, so much so that the act, despite the care of this side, becomes easier to undertake without it, such as .(one whose habit is to perform the tahajjud and to perform the night prayer (qiyam

He performs it every night, but while feeling lazy and drowsy. But when he has a guest, he stands up from his bed with agility and ease. Had he not hoped for rewards from Allāh, he would not have abandoned the pleasure of sleep not only due to the presence of the guest but this presence had an impact on him, making it easier for him to pray and to offer tahajjud, and the prayer will then be easier than it would have been if he had been .by himself

The third level: In it, the pretension is more hidden than it is in the second level: The non-divine side has nothing to do with the original intention to undertake the action, nor in the ease of doing it. But, at the same time, the substance of

pretension is present in the heart. It is known that such pretension cannot be identified except through the precise experiment such as suspected terminal physical ailments since these, after medical analyses, indicate the presence of a disease which the doctor .starts treating

So is the case with this spiritual disease: Precision is a must in diagnosing it. If some traces of the ailment are found, its substance will be known to be present. Its indication is that one must test himself at a time when people accidentally get to see his adoration. Will he ?then feel happy and elated on account of their seeing him or not

An individual may undertake an action with a sincere intention, desiring no pretension in it; rather, he even avoids pretending and hating it. But, at the same time, if he realizes that someone accidentally gets to know about it, he becomes happy, as if he feels restful when he gets to know that the individual saw how that act exhausted him. Such happiness and elation form the mark of pretension which is hidden within him, inside him, .from which elation drips

Had he directed his attention towards anyone other than Allāh, and had he paid no attention to people, there is no sense in this elation when he knows that others came to know about his [righteous] deed. Happiness [in such a case] is like a fire that is hidden inside a stone. It becomes evident when the stone hits iron and the

hidden fire comes out to the open and becomes obvious when the stone hits a stone. People who are acquainted with and knowledgeable about the stone hitting the iron .expose the hidden pretension

At that time, if this person does not react to this pleasure, that is, when happiness appears in his heart, and if he does not rebuke himself for it, reprimand it and meet it with hatred, this pleasure will be like nutrition for the disease's substance. It grows undetected, and the effect of that growth gradually creates in him the need to find a reason for people having to be familiar with his work. It is like talking about a subject and saying something casually. For example, if he is one of those who offer tahajjud, he talks about how the weather is cold or hot at the end of the night, or about something like that, .[so that others will understand that he was awake at that time [for tahajjud

It may even be more hidden than that, too, such as one does not say anything to suggest to others familiarity with them, with his actions, neither explicitly nor implicitly. But people can get to know it from the way he dresses himself, his appearance or general conditions, such as drowsiness, the low tone of his voice, how his lips are withered…, etc. Or he may not watch himself during his prostration in order to avoid hitting the ground so prostrating will bear an impact on

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his forehead. Deep inside his conscience he will be elated about it, that is, that he has a .visible mark of adoration

or a gathering for (ع) Or he may be at a mourning commemoration for Imām al-Hussain supplication. At the end of the gathering, he does not remove the tears from his eyes fully. There are marks like these, and even more hidden than that, which show no such indications: This means that he may perform a [righteous] deed sincerely without desiring anyone to notice it, nor does he like it to show, yet he expects people to start greeting him, to be generous to him, to meet him with a smile, with respect, to praise him, to be energetic in carrying out his errands, to be tolerant as they trade with him, etc. If he goes .to a meeting place, they make room for him

If anyone falls short of doing any of these things, he will find it in his heart to be too heavy, and he will find it unsuitable for his status. It is as if he is rewarded by people for the worship which he hides, so much so that had he not performed such worship, he would not have demanded all of this, nor would he have found it unacceptable when people treat him any less than that. In my view, this has roots which also extend to conceit. In reality, he demands that from Allāh, the most Glorified One, and even wonders why

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the Almighty did not cast love for him in the hearts of people so they may respect him although he did perform that "sincere" act of worship!

As a whole, unless the presence of worship is similar to its absence with regard to everything relevant to people, and had one not contended himself with the fact that Allāh knows about what he does, such an individual will not be free of pretension, even as low as the sound of ants' tracks, nor is he free of conceit either which we, by the will of Allāh, will discuss.

It is possible this much pretension voids one's rewards. Nobody is spared such type of pretension except Allāh's sincere worshippers, for Satan can have no way of reaching them. Perhaps a reference to this lies in a statement by the Commander of the Faithful Ali (ع) who is quoted as having said, "Allāh, the most Great, the most Exalted, will say to those who recite [the Holy Qur'ān in public] on the Judgment Day: 'Did people not sell to you cheap? Did people not start greeting you? Were your needs not taken care of by people?' According to tradition, [the Almighty adds saying] 'There are no wages for you here; you were paid your wages in full.'"

Abdullāh Mubarak is quoted as having said that it is narrated about Wahab son of Muneer saying that a man from among the travelers said to his fellows, "We left behind the wealth and the sons fearing oppression,

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now we fear lest more oppression has afflicted us than that with which people who have !wealth have been afflicted

If one of us is met, he likes to be respected because of the station of his piety. If he asks for something, he likes to be given on account of his faith. And if he buys something, he likes the seller to sell it to him cheaper because of his faith!" This reached the knowledge of their king who rode among a crowd of people. The valley and the mountain became full .of people. That traveler inquired about it and was told that the king was coming

He asked his servant to bring him food. He was brought beans and oil which he kept stuffing in his mouth, eating violently. The king asked the travelers, "Where is your fellow?" They pointed to him, whereupon the king asked him, "How are you?" The man said, "Like anyone else," but according to another way of telling this incident, "I am fine." The king said, "There is nothing good with this man," leaving him. The traveler said, !""Praise be to Allāh Who sent you away from me, thinking ill of me

Yes, my dear one, the sincere ones were apprehensive of hidden pretension, trying hard to mislead people about their righteous deeds out of their concern about hiding them more so than people's concern about hiding their bad deeds and sins, all of this in the ,hope their good deeds will be sincere

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so Allāh will reward them on the Judgment Day by hiding these bad deeds and sins from people. These sincere folks knew and became convinced that Allāh Almighty does not ,accept anything but what is purely for His sake, for He has said

And they have been commanded no more than this: To worship Allāh, offering Him" sincere devotion, being true (in faith): To establish regular prayers, and to practice regular .(charity: such is the right and straight religion" (Qur'ān, ٩٨:۵

The Judgment Day is the Day of their want and need for righteous deeds; it is the Day when neither wealth nor offspring will be of any benefit save for one who reaches Allāh .with a sound heart

A scholar has provided this example: The desert travelers go there with the best currency in circulation because they know that the need for it is the greatest in the desert, and that the desert people accept only the best currency. The same applies to those who have hearts. They witness the Day of Judgment and the rations whereby they supply themselves: piety, knowing that the best of rations is piety. They bring about deeds that .are free of pretension, protecting themselves against all levels of pretension

Unique Qur’anic Jewel

While narrating the story of Yousuf (Joseph) and his brothers, the Qur'ān states that after the latter having come to Egypt and asked Yousuf to provide them with provisions and :rations, the Qur'ān states the following

At length, once he had furnished them with"

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provisions (suitable) for them, he put the drinking cup in his brother's saddle-bag. Then a crier shouted out, 'O you (in) the caravan! Behold! You are thieves, without doubt!'" .((Qur'ān, ١٢:٧٠

One of the men of knowledge says, "It is not right to think that Yousuf accused his brother of theft so he would take him and keep him in his company because if Yousuf's purpose was to keep his brother with him, he did not have to accuse him in this ugly way, embarrassing him and letting him fall in the public's esteem as a thief although he is the son of the prophet of Allāh. Rather, he could have found another excuse to do that .without scratching his dignity

If he had to, he could have done so secretly, say, in a confidential personal meeting rather than before the public, so much so that a crier had to cry out to the caravan, charging it of theft. So, what prompted this announcement to the caravan which contained Canaanites who would return to the land of Canaan and the robbery committed by a prophet of Allāh would be the core of the talk in all meeting places and gatherings? Men will talk about it and so will the women, and the reputation of a house about which people know nothing ."but honor and spirituality will be ruined. There has to be something hidden in this matter

The man of knowledge goes on to say, "The hidden matter is that reaching truly

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divine dignity is not easy except through public humiliation. We tie dignity to the truth because posts and stations among the public are not truly dignifying. True dignity is in reaching nearness to Allāh. In other words, it is neighborliness of Allāh, the company of the Lord of the Worlds, a station of the truth near an Able King. The company of Allāh's servants is the company of Allāh. Whoever loves you loves Allāh, and whoever hates you hates Allāh. Whoever Allāh chooses, He starts with you. Whoever visits his brother in Allāh, the Almighty says, 'You have visited Me.'

This dignity does not become available except when conditions are met the greatest of which is humiliation by the people. If you wish, you can say that the greatest obstacle in the path towards Allāh and towards reaching Allāh's courtyard is love for prominence and eminence among the people. So long as the heart remains attached to such love, the owner of this heart cannot reach his destination as this narrative tells us: Two ferocious wolves, one of which attacks a herd of cattle from its beginning and the other from its end, are as detrimental to one's creed as loving distinction and a high station.

Therefore, the worldly mastership is rejected in the eyes of Allāh's friends who hate it as the Master of the Pious has said, 'By the One Who split the seed and created the breeze, had it not been for the presence of what is

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present..., you would have found this world of yours less important in my esteem than a goat's sneeze.' One who treads this path must take this love out of his heart, even if it means dropping his esteem from public eyes if he does not feel secure regarding the ills and detriments of his own nafs, just as severing a part of the body is permissible, even .obligatory, when there is concern about the health of the rest of the bodily parts

Therefore, the virtuous al-Naraqi has narrated in his book Mi'rāj al-Sa'āda about a scholar reciting the Qur'ān in front of their students and sincere ones deliberately in a way about which they claim he has no knowledge and that he is illiterate. Committing a small harm in order to attain a great deal of goodness is rational and according to the Sharī`a permissible. This concept has many testimonials from those who tread the path .towards Allāh, and many refer to it in their poems

One of the men of knowledge says, "I saw once in a vision someone whom I did not know. He handed me a piece of paper and ordered me to sign it. I signed it without knowing what is written in it or be familiar with its contents. Once I have signed it, the person who gave it to me said, 'Our narrative is quite hard; it is not tolerated except by an angel who is near to Allah, or a sent prophet, or a

.'servant whose heart Allāh tested with conviction

He read this tradition and said, 'I undoubtedly choose humiliation.' So, I woke up from my sleep and came to know that I had signed the document of my humiliation among the people so I may win through such humiliation the ability to bear the difficult traditions and the secrets of Ahl al-Bayt, peace be with them." This topic has a lengthy continuation, so .we shall leave it for its place and people

Generally, the impurities of hidden pretension are numerous, countless. As much as one realizes on his own about how a human being or an animal becomes acquainted with his adoration, he still has a branch of pretension. Since he has no hope set on animals and infants being thus acquainted with his adoration, he does not care whether they are present [when he is involved in an act of adoration] or if they are absent, whether they .notice his adoration or not

If one is sincere, having no desire about anyone [with regard to his acts of adoration], he will think very lowly of their knowledge of his acts of adoration because he knows that they, too, are like children: They cannot bring him sustenance, nor can they bear any impact on his destiny, nor increase his rewards. Rather, they cannot bring their own .selves any good, or any harm, or death, or life, or resurrection..., etc

At this point, in order to explain what we are driving at, we have to

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submit a question because the matter is very important: We see most people feeling glad when their good deeds are recognized; so, is such feeling of happiness lauded by the ?Sharī`a, or is it held as contemptible

The answer is that it is not lauded at all, nor is it held as contemptible either. Instead, it is :praised in some cases and held with contempt in others. Here are the details

:The lauded one falls into four categories

The first is that one's intention is to hide the acts of obedience and sincerity to Allāh, but when people noticed what he was doing, he has to remember that Allāh, the most Praised One, by virtue of His Attribute expressed in this supplication: "O One Who manifests what is beautiful!" has manifested something beautiful, so he is led to think that Allāh has fared well with him: The perfection of His munificence is that He hides obedience and disobedience. But Allāh, due to the beauty of His care, hides the man's acts disobedience while manifesting those of his obedience. This is a great act of kindness from the part of Allāh Almighty in his regard, hence the man is very happy on account of Allāh having done such a nice thing for him, not because people praise what he has done or the status in their hearts which he now occupies. It is as though he sees through it that Allāh, due to His favor and mercy, has accepted his deed, so he is

.happy about it

.(Say: 'In the bounty of Allāh, and in His mercy, let them rejoice!'" (Qur'ān, ١٠:۵٨"

The second is that his happiness stems from [his conviction that] since Allāh Almighty manifests what is beautiful in him while covering up what is ugly in this life, He will do likewise in the Hereafter as well, for Allāh is the Lord of the Hereafter and of this life. Actually, His mercy in the Hereafter is broader than it is in the life of this world as referred .to in the traditions

has said in one of his (ع) It is as though he is repeating what Imām Zayn al-`Ābidin supplications thus: "Lord! Just as You have covered up sins that I have committed in this life, I have a greater need that You will veil them in the Hereafter." His elation in the first case is due to accepting what is in the present time without considering the future, while in the second his mind is set about the future. One tradition states the following: "When Allāh covers up the sin of one of His servants in the life of this world, He covers it up for ."him in the Hereafter as well

The third is that his elation stems from his belief that hopefully those who see his act of adoration will emulate him, hence he will have an increase in the rewards. Even if he undertakes the action publicly with this same intention, he will not be violating the spirit

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of sincerity: He will have the reward, due to his intention, as though he undertook that deed privately firstly, and secondly due to Allāh Almighty manifesting his deed and letting others emulate his act of obedience to Him, and one who thus feels elated is quite justified. The manifestation of indications of benefit is sweet and undoubtedly prompts .one to be happy bout it

The fourth is this: When he sees how those who noticed his act of adoration praise him for being obedient to his Lord, he will feel happy and glad that they, too, obey Allāh and love .to see people obeying Him as well; their hearts incline towards the good deeds

There are some people who see obedient people and hold them in contempt, or feel envious, or speak ill of them, or ridicule them, or charge them with pretension rather than praise them for their act of adoration. This elation is due to seeing how good the belief of Allāh's servants is, how good their souls are. The sign of sincerity in this type is that one feels happy when people praise someone else just as he feels happy when they praise .him, perhaps even more so, as it is quite obvious

As regarding what is contemptible, it is when one feels happy for having earned a status in the hearts of people, so people may now praise and magnify him: This is hated and is .contemptible, and surely Allāh knows best

Wise Admonishment from the Professor of Theology, Imam-Al-Khomeini, May his Shade Endure

Quite often, it so happens

that a pretender does not pay attention to the fact that pretension has penetrated his actions, that his good deeds are a pretense and worth absolutely nothing. This is so because the traps of the self (nafs) and those of Satan are quite minute and transparent. Humanity's path is very narrow and dark: Unless man fully examines, he does not pay .attention to what he does

One thinks that his deeds are purely for the sake of earning the Pleasure of Allāh, but they instead please Satan. Since it is the human nature to be egotistical, such love for one's own self veils him from seeing his own faults. For example, earning the science of religion, which is one of the important acts of obedience and adoration, may afflict one with .pretension in this great form of adoration even while he is unmindful, unaware, of it

He, as we have already stated, due to the thick curtain, the curtain of self-love, likes to solve a scholarly problem in the presence of scholars and chiefs in a way which nobody else came up with. It will make him stand out, according to his own thinking. The more he explains the problem sufficiently, attracting the attention of those present, the more elated he feels. If someone opposes him, he has to overcome and humiliate him; he has to make him lower his head before people, forcing his own argument on him, his .opponent, whether it is right or wrong

,After vanquishing the opponent

he feels within himself that he has distinguished himself and earned a place of prominence. If a master believes what he says, so much the better. And the poor man is unaware that although he earned a status among the scholars and men of virtue, he dropped in the esteem of his Lord, the King of kings in all domains Who orders the deed of .such an individual to cause him to be hurled into Sijjeen

This pretentious deed was also mixed with various forms of disobedience: scandalizing a believer and humiliating him, harming the brother-in-faith, insulting and sometimes uncovering his faults. All these are sins and make an independent cause to render such an individual to be among the fellows of hell. If we suppose that the nafs places its trap before you and says to you, "My objective is to explain the legislative ruling and show the .word of truth, which is the best form of obedience

My goal is not to demonstrate my distinction, or to brag," you must ask it about its inner self the following question: If my friend, who is like me in my scholarly degree, explains the legislative ruling, and if he solves the problem himself, and if you were subdued in that meeting place, will your attitude be contrariwise?!' If the case is positive, you will be truthful in your claim. But if the nafs approaches you through the venue of trickery, abandoning no deception, saying to you, "There is a virtue for

manifesting righteousness, and Allāh rewards for it, and I want you to win this virtue and let you live in the abode of Allāh's rewards," you must say to it, "If we suppose that Allāh, the Praised One, granted you this virtue in case you are subdued and if you believe in righteousness, will you still seek victory over your opponent?"

Upon referring to your inner-self, if you find out that you love victory, too, and fame among the men of virtue as being a man of both knowledge and virtue, and that this scholarly research was in order to gain a status in their hearts, be informed that you are a pretender in this scholarly research which is one of the best forms of obedience to the Almighty and one of the best acts of worship, and that this deed was prompted by love for prominence and distinction which is more harmful to your conviction (imān) than two wolves raging in a flock the shepherd of which is absent, according to a narrative.

You are obligated, as a man of knowledge who seeks reform, one who guides others towards the path of the Hereafter, a doctor of psychological ailment, to reform yourself first and to repair your own temper so you will not be among the scholars whose good deeds are void, whose condition is very well known.

Lord! Do purge our hearts of the impurity of shirk and hypocrisy! Purify the mirror of our hearts from the adornment of

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loving this world which is the cause of all these matters. Be our Companion, help us, we poor souls who are afflicted with loving ourselves, with loving distinction and eminence, along this dangerous journey, this path that has many obstacles, the narrow and dark .one, surely You can do anything at all, Allāhomma Āmeen

Among the important acts of adoration in Islam is the congregational prayer service in which the distinction of the imām is greater; therefore, Satan penetrates in it more than in others. His enmity towards the imām is greater. Satan stands to deprive the imām of this virtue, empty his deed of sincerity, thus causing him to be lodged in Sijjeen, rendering .him associating a partner with Allāh, the most Great

Satan enters into the heart of imāms of congregational prayers from various paths such as conceit and pretension, which is making a show of this form of worship before the public in order to win a status in their hearts and earn the reputation of being great and sublime. For example, Satan sees so-and-so, who is a great worshipper, having attended his congregational prayers, whereupon he increases his submission, bringing him closer to himself through various means and tricks in order to get him in the end to fall in his .trap

He reminds the imām in his place of meeting, or through another way, to let people know that "So-and-so worshipper attends my congregational prayer service," finding in his heart love for this person who attends

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his service, demonstrating love and sincerity to him in a degree which he does not demonstrate to Allāh Almighty or to His close servants even for one moment in his lifetime, especially if the attendant of the prayer service is a respected businessman. If, God forbid, a man of distinction attends the prayer service because of losing track of his .path, so he joins the ranks in his congregation, the calamity will then be greater

Satan, at the same time, does not leave the imām alone whose group is smaller in number. He attends and insinuates to him to let people understand that "I have abandoned the world and I pray in the quarter's small mosque with the poor and the indigents." This imām is like his predecessor, even worse, because he nurtures in his heart the vice of jealousy, too, permitting its tree to produce its fruit. Since he had no share of the good things in this life, Satan deprives him of his share in the Hereafter as .well, rendering him a loser in this life and in the one to come

This Satan does not leave me or yourselves alone when we are not imāms of the congregational prayer service not because we shy away from it but our hands fall short of it, so he insinuates to us to defame the group of Muslims, to charge them, to suggest that there are faults with that group, counting our deprivation of the group as our isolation from it

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.and abandonment of this life

We identify ourselves as being free of love for the self and for prominence. We, then, are in a worse shape than both previous groups. We do not have the complete life enjoyed by the first group nor the incomplete one for the second group, nor do we have the Hereafter. Had we been able, our seeking eminence and our love for distinction and .wealth would have been greater than both those groups

Satan is not satisfied with playing tricks on the group's imām, nor is the fire of his desire quenched by turning the imām into a fellow of hell, but he also enters the rows of those .who follow the imām as well to commit his mischief

Since the first row is the best, and since the right side of a row is better than the left, it is his first target. Satan takes the hand of the poor worshipper and gets him out of his house despite the distance from the place where the group congregates and seats him in the right side of the first row. He starts insinuating to him to inform people of this virtue which he attained. This poor man, too, without Satan tempting him, manifests the distinction of his own self with twinkling and coddling, thus his inner shirk shows itself, entering his .(deed into the Sijjeen (the sinners' record

Then Satan enters in the rest of rows, mobilizing their folks to hold on to the first row and to throw

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the poor worshipper, who is sitting in the first rank, with their arrows of defamation and curses while labeling themselves with integrity. It may be noticed that Satan takes the hand of a respected person, especially if he is among the people of knowledge and distinction, to seat him in the other row so that this person may show people that despite his status among the public or in the world of knowledge, while a man like him ought not emulate such an imām, but "On account of my renunciation of this life and abandonment of the self's desire, I attended his congregational service. Despite all of this, I even sat in "...the last row

The likes of this individual are never seen in the first row at all! Satan does not contend himself with only the imām and those who follow him but sticks to the beard of one who prays individually, taking his rein, pulling him out of the home or market, spreading a carpet for him with twinkling and coddling in a corner in the mosque, a man who does not see any imām as being just, so he prolongs his bowing and prostrating as people look on, .repeating lengthy sacred verses

This person hides inside himself his desire that people must understand the following: "Due to the plentitude of my sanctity and precaution, I abandon the group so I may not be afflicted by praying with an imām who is not just." Besides being conceited and

pretentious, this man is also ignorant of the issues of the Islamic Sharī`a because the emulation authority of this person perhaps does not apply any criterion besides a good appearance so he may emulate an imām.

Thus do we place the rest of our matters at the disposal of Satan while whenever this cursed one finds an impure heart to which he resorts, he burns the apparent and the hidden deeds, rendering him among the fellows of hell even through good deeds. Thus ends the wise admonishment of Imām al-Khomeini.

Explaining how to scientifically and Practically cure the Heart of the Disease of Pretension

Some scholars of the hereafter have made statements in this regard which I would like to cite here briefly with some explanations:

You have come to know that pretension voids the good deeds and causes Allāh to hold one in contempt, that it is one of the major lethal sins; so, you have to get ready, be serious and struggle while bearing the hardship of uprooting this tree from the heart. Reaching the ladders of sublime humanity is not easy without bearing hardships. Likewise, getting rid of terminal diseases cannot be achieved except by taking bitter medicines. This struggle, though tough in the beginning, falls within the practical field; its hardship gradually dissipates completely.

Let it be known that the origin of pretension is love for prominence. If love for prominence is analyzed, it will be rendered to three roots:

۱. Love for praise; man loves to be praised and lauded; he finds pleasure in hearing compliments,

۲. Flight from ill reputation; man

hates to be the source of ill reputation; he is harmed and feels the pain when hearing that his reputation is being chewed,

.Greed for what people possess .٣

.These three often cause pretension

It may be observed how one does not desire praise, nor does he covet lauding, nor does he look at what others enjoy, but he cannot tolerate to be reprimanded and spoken ill of, so he undertakes a pretentious act. He is like a miser individual who participates in a deed of righteousness when he sees others doing likewise, spending money for that cause. He finds himself among generous people who offer plenty of money by way of charity.

He offers little of it by way of charity so he may not be described as a stingy person. Or he may be like a young man among youths who are worshipping, keeping themselves busy with prayer and supplication, so he, too, prays and supplicates so that he may not be spoken ill of and accused of being lazy and idle. And there are among the scholars those who do not covet to be praised by people, but he cannot tolerate to be identified as knowing very little.

If he is asked about an issue with which he is not familiar, he is swift to issue a verdict without knowledge rather than convincing himself of asking someone else who is familiar with it for fear he may be held as ignorant. Generally speaking, one can be patient with regard to

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.the pleasure of praise but cannot tolerate the pain of being spoken ill of

One who treats these three causes has to know that one seeks and desires something due to thinking that it is good, useful and sweet to him, whether it is so now or it will be in the future. If he gets to know that it is pleasurable in the present time but is harmful in its outcome, it will be easy for him not to desire it. It is like one who knows that honey is delicious, so he craves eating it, but if it becomes obvious to him that it contains poison, it .will be easy for him to shy away from it. Thus is the case with our subject

No matter how much a servant of Allāh knows that pretension is harmful, that it causes him not to reform his harm, that it deprives him of imminent success and the loss of a station in the hereafter, in the final outcome, bringing him punishment, contempt and infamy, when someone cries out as witnesses testify: "O debauchee, treacherous, pretender, polytheist! Did you ever feel the shame when you traded the obedience to Allāh for what the short life offered? Did you not watch people's hearts but did not watch out when you meet the Truth, Praise to Him? Did you not seek popularity among the ?servants of Allāh by doing what brings about wrath from Allāh

Did you not decorate yourself with what makes you

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look bad in the eyes of Allāh? Did you not seek nearness to the servants of Allāh by being distant from Him? Did you not seek their praise by being ill spoken of by Allāh? Did you not seek their pleasure by exposing yourself to Allāh's anger? Did anyone else stand in your eyes as being thus less important than Allāh?!" We seek refuge with Allāh from such .humiliation and exposure

If only you could see when the guilty ones bend their heads down before their Lord..."" .((Qur'ān, ٣٢:١٢

So, no matter how much a servant of Allāh thinks about this humiliation, comparing it with what he earns from His servants, from making himself look good in their eyes, a status among them attained through the venue of pretension, one which he may not even get, comparing it with what he will face of shame and infamy in the Hereafter..., he will then come to know that pretension is fire that has burnt his good deeds, rendering them into the record of the sinners. He may have lost a high status with Allāh by earning this good deed which he spoiled with pretension, a status that places him in the company of the .prophets and the righteous

Surely pretension has taken him out of the latter's company and send him to the row of the accursed, add to this what he will be exposed to in the life of this world of worries because of trying to please others. To please

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others is an unattainable objective; whenever you please a group, another is displeased with you. What goal does he achieve when he earns their praise? What does he get when he drops in the eyes of Allāh while raising himself in the eyes of His servants while such praise does not increase his sustenance, nor does it prolong his lifespan, nor does it benefit him on the day when he realizes his poverty and want?

So, O pretender who lets pretension covet his good deeds, be informed that Allāh, Praise to Him, is the One Who manipulates the hearts to either withhold or to give, and the beings have no choice in this regard, nor is there anyone to sustain them besides Allāh. One who sets his hopes on people will never be free of humiliation and disappointment. Even if he arrives at his goal, he will not be without indebtedness to others, without receiving humiliation; so, how could you abandon what Allāh has in store with Him in exchange for a false hope, for a bad whim that may hit the mark or miss it: If it hits the mark, its pleasure does not compensate for the pain of its bad outcome and humiliation?!

O pretender! Beware of fearing being spoken ill of! When people speak ill of you, it does not speed up your demise, nor does it postpone it, nor does it render you among the residents of hell if you are a resident of Paradise, nor does it

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make you contemptible in the eyes of Allāh if you are praised by Him, for all the servants are incapacitated: They cannot cause any harm to their own souls, nor benefit, nor life, nor death, nor resurrection; so, perfection is not achieved through their praise, nor is it .diminished because of their criticism

A poet from Banu Tamim once said, "Praise for me is good, while criticizing me is bad," said to him, "You have lied! This applies to Allāh: (ص) whereupon the Messenger of Allāh There is nothing good except in praising, nor is there anything bad more than saying something bad about Him. What good would you get when people praise you while you are held in contempt by Allāh? And what evil could touch you if people speak ill of you "?while Allāh praises you

Generally speaking, it is through thinking about these matters that it is hoped that one's heart is directed towards Allāh, so he gets rid of the humiliation of pretension and the cruelty of people's hearts. Lights from his sincerity reflect themselves on his heart whereby his chest is pleased. Through them will beautiful revelations be opened up that increase his feeling of happiness for being in the company of Allāh, of being unhappy when he is in the company of people. He will then hold life in contempt while holding the Hereafter with high regards. The status of the creation drops from his heart. The reason for pretension collapses, and the paths of

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...sincerity will be facilitated for him

When Showing off Acts of Worship is Permissible: Advice by Imam Khomeini, May I be his Sacrifice, for those who want Admonishment

Practical Treatment for Pretension

Contemplating upon and making plans for the issues which we have stated, though it has a strong effect in treating this disease, ought not suffice to scientifically treat this dangerous ailment. Rather, the disease has also to be practically monitored. The practical medication is that one must accustom himself to hiding his acts of adoration and closing the doors while doing them just as the doors are closed when sins are committed, till his heart is convinced that Allāh knows about and is familiar with his acts of adoration, and .his soul does not stop him from seeking anyone to know about them save Allāh

It has been narrated that a companion of Abū Hafs, the blacksmith, spoke ill of this life and of its people, whereupon Abū Hafs said to him, "You have manifested what you should have hidden. From this day on, do not keep us company." He did not even permit showing this much because in speaking ill of this life there is a sort of invitation to asceticism, and such an invitation often stems out of pretension; therefore, this student made him the object of his teacher's reprimanding

There is no cure for pretension like hiding. This is so even though it, in the beginning, is very difficult to do, but if one perseveres about it by forcing himself, he will be aided by divine acts of kindness, and good success will be his; it will then

.be easier for him and his burden will fall through support and help from the Almighty

Let me cite for you, kind reader, some of what has been narrated about the biographies :of the Imāms of Guidance who are the doctors of the souls

Al-Qummi, the narrator of traditions, may Allāh be pleased with him, has narrated saying that Imām Ali son of Imām al-Hussain (peace be with them both) used to come out during the pitch dark of the night carrying a sack on his back in which he placed small bundles containing [gold] dinars and [silver] dirhams, and he might also have carried on his back .food or firewood

He would come to a house door and knock it then hand over something to whoever comes out to open it, covering his face meanwhile so the poor recipient may not know who he is. When his corpse was placed down for the burial bath, his back showed marks of swellings as large as camel humps. He used to sustain a hundred families from among .the poor of Medīna

The son of Aisha is quoted as having said, "I heard the residents of Medīna saying, 'We died.' When he died and (ع) have now lost the secret charity when Ali son of al-Hussain was stripped for the funeral burial, they kept looking at the marks on his back. They said that he used to carry flour sacks on his back during the night in order to get them to reach the poor of

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."Medīna stealthily, and he used to say that secret charities put out the wrath of the Lord

has said, "The greatest rewards for an act of worship are for one who (ص) The Prophet (hides them."(١

The Commander of the Faithful, peace be with him, has said, "One of the treasures of Paradise are: hiding a good deed, persevering while facing calamities, and hiding (hardships."(٢

The Imāms, peace be with them, are also cited as having said, "The distinction of a good deed done in secrecy over one done openly is that the first will be rewarded seventy (times as much."(٣

.There are many other such narratives

Ares where Showing Acts of Worship is Permissible

There is no doubt in the requirement of sincerity in the act of adoration and obedience to win the pleasure of Allāh Almighty. This is taken for granted as one of the principles that have to be taken into consideration in all conditions and circumstances. No other rational or legislated incentive advances an act for the Divine One more than it. Sometimes what the nafs insinuates is not even considered: A deed has a great benefit; therefore, it must be undertaken in order to show people. A pretentious deed gives the person who :undertakes it nothing in return as the Holy Qur'ān clearly states

like those who spend their substance (just) to be seen by men but do not believe in... " Allāh or the Last Day. They are in parable like a hard, barren rock on which there is a little soil; a heavy rain

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١- Safeenat al-Bihar. Bihar al-Anwar, Vol. ١٥.

٢- Ibid.

٣- I say that the professor, may my soul be his sacrifice, has transmitted this statement from his own great mentor Shah-Abadi (may Allah be pleased with him). But I saw it recorded in the book titled Mirsad al-Ibad by Sheikh Najm ad-Deen, and favor belongs to

.the one who does a good deed first

falls on it, leaving it (just) a bare stone. They will be able to do nothing with whatever they .(had earned" (Qur'ān, ۲:۲۶۴

Besides adhering to this accepted principle of the Sharī`a, we say that hiding a righteous deed, although it contains the benefit of sincerity and the absence of pretension, yet, on the other hand, if it is done openly, it may also produce a benefit which is: making it desirable to people. Thus, people may emulate the one who does it even if the deed may :be threatened with pretension. The deed in both cases is raised in the Holy Qur'ān

If you disclose (acts of) charity, even so it is well, but if you conceal them and make them" reach those (who are really) in need, that is best for you: It will remove some of your .((stains of) evil from you. And Allāh is well acquainted with all what you do" (Qur'ān, ۲:۲۷۱

Disclosing them is of two types: One is disclosing the act itself publicly, and the other is .talking about it after it has been secretly done

As regarding the first, it in fact has preference over what can be done secretly and what can be done publicly. If the act cannot be hidden, such as performing the pilgrimage, going for a holy war, attending the congregational prayer service, and the like, it ought to be undertaken and not to let the insinuation have room in it. Doing such deeds openly has nothing to do with

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making a show or with pretension. Rather, the benefit of taking the initiative in such deeds is to let people desire them, but the condition in them, as we stated, is that they .must not be done just to show off. They are to be done publicly

Rather, perhaps the catalyst to hide such forms of worship is pretension as we pointed out before. It is this: Some souls covet to have a status in the hearts of people, so people may think well of them. In such case, what is also known is this: One who knows that they cannot be hidden, that they will eventually be known, he tries to hide doing them. This is so because if people see the action later on, and they will have to, they will think that this person does what he does for the sake of Allāh, praise belongs to Him, and he does not .like people to get to know his deeds

For example, if someone wants to perform the pilgrimage, he knows that this action cannot be hidden from people because later he will have to be seen in Mecca and Mina and perform the rounds and other rituals which will be seen by a huge number of people. And he, once back from the pilgrimage, will be visited by the brethren; so, this deed will imminently be known. But if people come to know about it, they will state that he was hiding the preparations for it, so they

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will consider him as being sincere in his action and will think well of him. Such an individual .is either a fool or a deceiving pretender who wants to hide his pretension from people

But if the deed can and cannot be hidden, such as offering charity and prayers, it has to be manifested so long as there is no pretension in such manifesting, that there will be no harm in it such as showing the act of offering charity while harming the one receiving it. In such a case, it has to be hidden. But if it has no other harm, it is better to manifest it because it contains a public invitation to others to do likewise. This is proven by the tradition of the prophets and friends of Allāh (ص) who has said the following about such a person: "... He will have the reward of doing it as well as that of anyone else who emulates it."

Tradition narrates that doing a deed secretly equals doing it publicly seventy times. There are manifold rewards for doing a good deed secretly, as many as seventy times, if it follows the custom of doing it secretly. As long as the heart separates itself from the impurities of pretension, and sincerity is complete in both cases, there is no doubt that anything good which is emulated by others is surely better. The concern is only about pretension being unveiled. When the impurity of pretension takes place, emulation of others will

.not avail the doer, and he will perish by it; secrecy in such a case is better

:But one who manifests the deed must take two matters into consideration

First, he must manifest it while knowing or thinking it will be emulated, such as a man doing something good for his family, or a mentor in his quarter, or a scholar in his country, regardless of the variation of individuals' stations. In other words, the emulation intention is sound in one who is apt to be emulated; otherwise, there is no benefit in manifesting it, .and he will miss out on the benefit of doing it secretly

Second, one must monitor his heart; it may have hidden pretension, so it invites him to manifest in the excuse of emulation. It, in reality, covets that undertaking the effort to win a station of emulation, and this is a hurdle that cannot be transcended except by the strong ones, the sincere. Others, the weaklings, must not deceive themselves, so they will .perish and cause others to perish unknowingly

The similitude of the weakling in this dilemma is one who does not know how to swim well. He looks at a group of drowning persons, so he feels pity for them and goes to them to cling to him so he may save them from drowning. They cling to him, whereupon this weakling perishes just as they perish. Thus do the feet of the servants of Allāh and of the scholars slip away. Some of them

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hold on to the strong in their manifestation, but their hearts are not strong enough for sincerity, so their rewards are cancelled by pretension.

Notice that this is shrouded with ambiguity. One who wants to know the treachery of his soul and whether his aim in manifesting the good deed is to propagate it and advocate it, or if he has already fallen into Satan's trap, he must subject himself to a test. The test is: He must ask himself if a man of truth, the one who works for Allāh Almighty, tells him to hide the deed so people may emulate another scholar or worshipper from among his peers, and he will have the same reward of doing the good deed publicly..., and if his heart inclines to be the one to be emulated, so he manifests the deed, let him know that the incentive of pretension is there rather than the desire for divine rewards. It is the desire for people's goodness because they aspired to achieve goodness through the action of some other worshipper who received his reward.

He obtained it despite his secrecy. So, what is wrong with his heart inclining towards manifesting it other than the eyes of people noticing it, making a pretense for their sake? Let the servant of Allāh beware of the soul's deception, for it often deceives, while Satan ever lies in ambush. Love for a public status subdues one's heart. Seldom are manifested deeds safe from perils; so, he must

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not substitute safety for anything else, the safety in hiding and in manifesting, perils that our likes cannot bear; therefore, we and all other weaklings ought to be cautious.

A scholar who was propagating the creed was seen in a vision and was asked what was done to him. He said, "When I arrived at the barzakh [perhaps equivalent in Catholic theology to the purgatory], I was called upon by my name and was asked what I had done in my lifetime. I said, 'Lord! I wrote many books to promote the faith.' I was asked, 'While propagating the creed, did you intend that the faith was to be promoted, or did you want your own self to be widely known?' I was too puzzled to answer." This is why the tradition states the following: "Be sincere in doing your good deed, for the critic is quite observing."

As regarding the second type, it is one talking about the deed and announcing it after having secretly done it. Like the first, this, too, is dangerous. It is even much more so: The tongue is easy to articulate and move about narrating the tale with ease, and it may increase, decrease or exaggerate. The nafs enjoys manifesting claims supportive of love for itself; so, one whose heart is strong, sincere, in whose eyes people look small, it is equal with him whether they speak well or ill of him. If mentioning it to those whom he hopes will emulate it, thus seeking goodness

.because of it..., it is permissible to talk about the deed

He will even be required to do so if his intention is pure and free of all perils because it is an invitation to others to do (similar) acts of righteousness, an invitation to do good which is good by itself, especially if one's nature is molded on loving to emulate others and being emulated, feeling the weight of its burdens. Talking plays a strong role in bearing an .impact on people's hearts, on their emulating the speaker

Perhaps a pretender manifesting an act of worship, when people do not know that it is pretension, has a great deal of good in it for people, yet it is evil against the pretender; so, how many sincere people have been the reason behind their sincerity is to emulate one who in the eyes of Allāh is a pretender! A narrated tradition states this: "Allāh strengthens this religion through the sinning man, and through people who do not ponder on consequences"; it refers to that. Talking about a good deed, if one is sincere without any pretension, is good, although there is something quite interesting which we noticed about :great men and which we would like to state here

The men of divinity, those who rid themselves of desires, used to discourage others from narrating visions while attributing them to their own selves. They used to say instead, "I know someone who does such-and-such" or "Such-and-such happened the following to him by

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way of self-disclosure," for example, because the objective is achieved through the action or disclosure itself, and it is not needed to get to know who did it except if knowing so also plays a role in impressing, in emulating. It is only then that they used to identify .themselves

Advice by Imam-Al-Khomeini, May I be his Sacrifice, for those who Wish to be Admonished

So, my dear one, look deeply into your affairs and hold yourself to account in each of its deeds. Pull words out of it in every incident, so you may get to know for what purpose it is willing to do good deeds and honorable acts, why it asks about issues relevant to the night prayer, why it recites supplications in the presence of others... Does it intend that we should learn the answers to our questions from it, or does it teach them for the sake ?of Allāh Almighty

Or does it want to be known by people as one of those who perform tahajjud? Why does it want people to know it is traveling on pilgrimage to sacred places, or even the number of such travels? Why it does not want people to know about its acts of charity which it offered in secrecy, so it resorts to other means in order that talk will pour into the subject ?of charity, and it will then announce it offers people charity

If all of this is done for the sake of Allāh Almighty, if you want people to emulate you and :you will be implied in this statement

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One who leads to a good deed is like one who does it", manifesting your god deed will" then be good. Thank Allāh, Praise to Him, with your pure conscience and heart, but be alert lest you should be deceived by the nafs and by Satan when they both insinuate to .you, and do not let them force you to do a pretentious deed in a sacred manner

If manifesting is not purely for the sake of Allāh, abandon manifestation, for it is nothing but fame, and it comes from the foul tree of pretension. Allāh, to Whom all favors belong, does not accept such a deed, and He orders its doer to be placed in Sijjeen. We seek refuge with Allāh against the plots of the self, the nafs, for they are quite minute, and we .all know in general that our deeds are not purely for the sake of Allāh Almighty

Had we been sincere worshippers, why does Satan thus fare with our deeds although he had promised Allāh, Praise to Him, that he would never intercept the path of the sincere worshippers of Allāh nor stretch his hand to their holy field? Our greatest mentor, may his shade prolong, says, "Satan is the dog that stands at the gate of Allāh. A dog does not bark at the friends of the house's owner, nor does he harm them. The dog stands guard at the door; he does not bother those with whom the owner of the house

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feels comfortable. Instead, he prohibits from entering those whom the owner of the ."house does not

If you keep Satan busy about your own self, you must know that your deeds are not purely for the sake of Allāh, not for achieving His pleasure. If you were sincerely seeking Allāh, why did the springs of wisdom now flow from your heart to your tongue even though you have been for the past forty years doing deeds which you regard as bringing you closer to Allāh? This is so although tradition says that if one is sincere to Allāh for forty .mornings, the springs of wisdom will flow from his heart to his tongue

So, be informed that our deeds are not purely for the sake of Allāh, nor are we even aware of it. Such is the incurable ailment. Woe unto the folks of obedience and adoration, of Fridays and congregations, of knowledge and faith, if they open their minds and see the Hereafter having opened its pavilions! They will then see themselves as being much worse than those who committed major sins, worse even than the apostates and those !who associate partners with Allāh

They will see the tablet of their deeds more black than that of those folks! Woe unto one who enters hell on account of his prayers and acts of obedience! Alas for those whose charity, zakat and prayers are portrayed in the most ugly form! So, poor soul, you are an ,apostate... As for the sinners

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they are the ones who believe in His Unity though they disobey Him, and Allāh Almighty ,forgives the disobedient ones through His favor if He wills. But He has said

(Allāh does not forgive one who associates partners with Him" (Qur'ān, ۴:۴۸"

if he dies without having repented. In the sacred traditions, according to what I have heard, the Infallible Ones, peace be with them, have said, "A pretender associates partners with Allāh; one who shows off his religious prominence, his being an imām, his having studied and earned knowledge, and his fast and prayers..., generally in his good deeds, so he may earn a status in the hearts of people, associates others with Allāh," according to the reports transmitted about the ones who are infallible, peace of Allāh be .with them all

Forgiveness is not extended to him, according to the sacred verse above. Would you have been among those who committed major sins, openly declaring your being a debauchee, !violating the pure sanctities?! But you believed in His Unity, associating none with Allāh

So, my dear one, now think about your matter, cure your soul, and be informed that fame among people who are worth nothing is worth nothing. Had a sparrow eaten those hearts, it would not have satisfied its hunger; they are worthless, equaling nothing. This weakling creature has no power; power is found only in the divine holy presence, and the Holy One is the only doer, the One Who causes things, while if the creatures

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want to create flies, they will never be able to do so even if each supports the other in the .endeavor

And if the flies rob them of something, they can never reclaim it. Power belongs to Allāh Almighty; He is the One Who bears an impact on all things in existence. So, exert yourself through all types of self-training and perseverance to write with the mind's pen on the heart's sheet that none can bear an impact on existence save Allāh; none is a doer in the abode of verification save Allāh. Enable your heart through all means of practical unifying, which is the first degree of tawhīid, and make your heart a believer, admitting this blessed .word

Stamp your heart with the stamp that there is no god save Allāh. Make it the portrait for the tawhīd statement. Get it to reach the station of comfort. Attract its attention to the fact that people can neither do any harm nor any benefit to you but, rather, the One Who can benefit or harm you is Allāh, Praise to Him. Remove from your mental vision this blindness, for there is concern that you may be among those who will say, "Lord! Why did You resurrect me blind?", that you will be resurrected blind on the Day when the .innermost becomes manifest

The will of Allāh supersedes all wills. If your heart becomes comfortable with this blessed statement, so you surrender it to this creed, there is hope your end

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will be good, the roots of shirk, pretension, apostasy and hypocrisy will all be uprooted .from your heart

Be informed that this faith agrees with reason and tradition. There is no ambiguity in it about obligation, although it is possible that one who is not knowledgeable about its principles and precepts may charge it of forcing obligations. The hearing faculties of those who make such charges are not accustomed to some requirements. It is not linked to .obligation essentially. It, then, is tawhīd, whereas obligation is shirk

Such is guidance, while obligation is straying. It is not appropriate to explain what obligation and what destiny is, but the topic is clear for those who are apt to it, while others should not get themselves involved in such pursuit. The One Who brought about the Sharī`a prohibits entering into such pursuits [for those who are not qualified to do so]. Anyhow, plead to the Merciful Allāh in all circumstances, especially when you are in .solitude

Plead to Him with humility, inability, and submission to guide you to the noor of tawhīd, so He may enlighten your heart with the glitter of the unknown, with sincerity in your adoration, so you may be freed from the whole world and you will see everything in it as being trivial. Humbly seek the Holy One's help to make your deeds dedicated to Him, to .guide you to the path of sincerity, of love

If you achieve a good result, remember that you are a weak servant

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of Allāh, the one who is stripped of the truth, who spent his lifetime following his whims and desires, whose heart, because of the impurity of transgressions and heart diseases, no longer accepts any advice, nor can any verse or tradition bear an impact on it, nor can any evidence, proof or sign. If you do so, perhaps you will be guided to a path that bring about salvation through supplication, for Allāh does not turn away a believer who goes to .His door; He responds favorably to his supplication

Having reminded you of these requirements, though you, too, knew them, for they are not new..., take your time to cultivate your heart, to examine your deeds and actions, your motion and stillness. Look into your heart's hideouts, and hold your heart to account as strictly as anyone among the folks of this world who holds his partner accountable. Abandon any deed in which there is the doubt of pretension and flattery, no matter how .very honest such a deed may be

If you see that your public acts of adoration are not being performed sincerely, do them privately, although they are recommended to be performed publicly, although rare is the case when pretension agrees in the origin of an obligation but is often in its particularities, .in what is commendable, in what is superfluous

Yet, at any rate, purify your heart from the contamination of shirk through a completely serious effort, through a great deal of exertion, so you, God

forbid, may not be removed from this [transient] world while being in this condition [to the Hereafter], hence your status will be bad, and there will be no hope for your salvation, and Allāh, Praise to Him, will be angry with you. This is confirmed by a sacred tradition in Wasā'il al-Shī'a which cites Qurb al-Isnād which in turn traces it back to the Commander said, 'One who makes himself (ص) who said, "The Messenger of Allāh (ع) of the Faithful look good in the eyes of people by doing what Allāh loves, while being an opponent of Allāh in secrecy by committing what Allāh hates, will find Allāh angry with him, holding him ."'in contempt

This tradition carries two possibilities. One of them is when an individual beautifies his good deeds for people while privately committing ugly ones. The other is that he goes out to the public and shows others what he has done while deep down he is only a pretender. At any rate, this tradition contains a reference to pretension because doing what is obligatory and what is commendable, without meaning to make a show, does not incur the wrath of the Lord. Rather, it can be said that the second possibility is more likely because doing ugly deeds publicly is uglier than doing them privately. Anyhow, God forbid that the King of Kings and the most Merciful of those who show mercy should be wrathful with man. I seek refuge with Allāh from the wrath of

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.the Clement One

.Here ends his sacred statement, may his shade be prolonged

:Notice

As we have repeatedly stated, the traps of the nafs are numerous; Satan lies in ambush against man in order to rob him of his capital for the Hereafter through countless tricks. But the more familiar with these tricks one is, such familiarity may benefit him in being :saved from them. Let us add to the above the following

It may coincide that one spends the night with his adoring friends who stand up for the tahajjud and spend the entire or some of the night praying, and he in his customary case may offer tahajjud, but he used to rise close to dawn. So, if he sees them, his energy is fired up in harmony with them, so much so that he performs more than what he is used to, or he may pray although he was not accustomed to performing the night prayer. Also, he may be among a crowd of fasting persons, so he is energetic in performing the fast. Had it not been for them, such energy would not have been fired up. In cases such as "?these, a question is put forth: "Is this pretension, so he has to abandon it

The answer is: Not at all. Rather, it can be explained in a way wherein some matters are distinguished from others. A believer, since he wishes to adore Allāh, performs the night prayer and fasts during the daytime and may be hindered by obstacles, stopped

by being busy, overcome by desires and pleasures, overcome by indifference, etc. If he accompanies those who adore, this indifference may abandon him, or the obstacles may be pushed away from his path, or he may not keep himself busy doing anything, so he is .energized for adoration

For example, he may be at home more capable of sleeping, enjoying a supple bed, or enjoying his wife, or talking with his children and relatives, or he may be busy with his daily transactions. These distract him from adoration during the first hours of the night, so he has no energy to stand up for prayers at the end of the night. If he finds himself in .someone else's home, all these distractions will be removed from him

Moreover, he may be manipulated by an impetus for righteousness such as seeing his friends turning their attention fully towards Allāh, turning away from the life of this world, adoring their Loved One, feeling the pleasure of addressing Him, so the catalyst of goodness moves within him, prompting him not to be late from the field of worship. He will then compete with them in their endeavor. It is in such doing that the competing ones .should compete with each other

There is no doubt that this has nothing to do with pretension. Or one may be robbed of sleep because of not being used to that house, or for any other reason, so he takes advantage of his sleeplessness. But when he is at

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home, sleep overtakes him. Perhaps it may be added to the above his being always at home, and his soul does not permit him to always offer tahajjud except for a short while. .His condition will be a cause for such energy

The same applies to fast. It may be hard for him to fast at home in the presence of delicious foods, and it is difficult for him to keep himself away from them. But if these foods are not present, the religious impetus to fast takes over. The available pleasures are obstacles and catalysts that weaken one's religious practice. If one is freed from them, the catalyst will be strong. Satan in such situations insinuates to him through pretension and says, "Do not do it, for you will then be a pretender, for you used not to do ."it at home nor offer more than your [regular] prayers

He must not pay attention to such insinuation but undertake the deed so Satan and his nafs may lose hope and not repeat their insinuation. And his desire and energy may be for the sake of their observing him thus engaged, being concerned about what they may say and the possibility of their accusing him of being lazy, especially if they think that he is among those who offer tahajjud and adoration. His soul does not permit him to fall in their eyes. It wants to maintain its status. It is then that Satan, contrarily to the first possibility, says to

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him, "Offer your prayers, for you are sincere, and you do not pray for their sake but for that of Allāh, since you used to pray every night. And if you do not pray for one night or more, it is due to the abundance of hindrances. Your catalyst tonight is the absence of the ."obstacles, not for the desire that they see you

The diagnosis in both situations confuses those who do not have a keen insight. If it is known that the catalyst is to bring the hearts of the public closer, he may either abandon the adoration or not offer anything more than what he used to do, not even one more prostration. If he comes to know that his energy is due to the removal of the obstacles and to compete with others for winning the Pleasure of Allāh and His obedience, he must .take advantage of the opportunity and keep himself busy worshipping his Lord

The diagnosis in both situations is tough for all those who do not have a keen insight. If one gets to know that the motive is to attract people's hearts, he must either abandon the acts of adoration or not add anything to what he is accustomed to doing, not even a single prostration. If he gets to know that the catalyst is the removal of obstacles and the competition for achieving the pleasure of and obedience to Allāh, let him seize the .opportunity and keep himself busy worshipping his Lord

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But if the matter is confusing to him and he is unable to diagnose the matter, let him ask himself this question: "If these men see him praying at a place where they do not see me, will I be generous with my prayers while they do not notice me?" If there is such generosity, let him pray, for the motive is right. But if he sees himself as having hardship doing so while they did not see him, let him leave it for its motive is pretension.

Likewise, he may be present during a supplication meeting. He looks at them and is overcome with tears out of fear of Allāh. But had he heard the supplication while being by himself, he would not have wept. Seeing people weak softens the heart; so, this is not pretension. Rather, he may not be able to weep, so he feigns weeping. This feign weeping, too, may not be motivated by pretension; instead, he fears for his heart lest it should be hard when he sees people weeping and when his eyes do not shed tears; therefore, he forces himself to pretend to be weeping. This is commendable.

The mark of truth in this is that he asks himself this: If he heard them praying while they could not see him, will he be concerned about his heart being hard, so he would feign weeping or not? If he does not find tears while being unnoticed by them, his concern is not due to

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his heart being hard, but it is out of his fear lest it should be said that he is hard-hearted. In this case, he ought to abandon his pretense of weeping. And the cause of weeping may be due to grief, but it is mixed with pretension during the time when he weeps, so he raises his voice and becomes quite vocal in his wailing; this additional enthusiasm is pretension. He first wept for the sake of Allāh but then Satan kept him doing so. .Pretension may invite him to keep his tears on his face in order to show it

On the whole, one's nafs and Satan have countless tricks. As a tradition states, "Pretension has seventy doors," keeping in mind that "seventy" is an indication of "many", while each door may open up to many other doors. Another tradition says, "Seek refuge with Allāh against the pretentious submission." The meaning of "pretentious submission" is that the organs, the limbs, not the heart, are submitting to Allāh, although it could have another meaning. In his supplication, the Master of those who Prostrate states this: "Lord! I seek refuge with You against my publicly looking [(ع) [Imām al-Sajjad good in the eyes of people while looking ugly in Your eyes privately, keeping people feeling pity for me while losing that with which You are more familiar than I am, demonstrating to people my best condition while revealing to You my worst, seeking nearness to people through my good deeds, fleeing away

from You through my wrongdoing, hence I will be afflicted with Your contempt, and Your !"wrath will fall upon me! Do, Lord, shelter me from all of this, O Lord of the Worlds

A Seal of Musk, Sublime Tradition an Explanation by Imām Al-Khomeini, May his Shade Prolong

As we conclude these sheets, we would like to cite a sacred tradition narrated by al-Kulaini (may Allāh be pleased with him) in his sacred book Al-Kāfi from the Master of Sheikh .(ع) those who believe in the Unity of Allāh, namely the Commander of the Faithful al-Sadūq (may Allāh be pleased with him) has narrated a similar one from Imām Abū .(ع) to Ali (ص) It is one of the pieces of advice by the Prophet .(ع) Abdullāh al-Sādiq

who said that the (ع) The tradition is thus rendered through isnād to Abū Abdullāh had said, "There are three distinctive marks of a pretender: (ع) Commander of the Faithful He is energetic [in feigning acts of adoration] when he sees people, is lazy when alone, ."and loves to be praised in all his affairs

:Imām al-Khomeini, may his shade prolong, has said the following

Since this disgusting sin may be hidden, not known by even the person with which he is afflicted: He claims his deed is sincere, whereas in his innermost, he is among the pretenders. For this reason, they have stated a mark of identification so one may thereby :identify his innermost, and he may thus start curing himself of it

One sees himself, when alone, as having no desire to undertake acts of obedience to

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Allāh. When he forces himself to perform an act of worship, as he is accustomed to doing, he does so without energy or desire. Rather, he performs it as incomplete, impure. But if he is present in mosques or congregations, he keeps himself busy with an act or adoration as he is seen by the public. So he does it with energy, with connection, with pleasure, and with an attentive heart. He loves to prolong his bowing and prostrating during his prayer, performs what is commendable, well carries out its parts and .requirements

If his mind wakes up to such doing, and if he asks himself about the reason for doing that, the nafs will then place its trap on the principles of adoration and, in order to deceive one, says, "Your energy with regard to worship in mosques is more rewarding," or that prayers with a congregation is such and such. Or he may be in a congregation other than the mosques, so it says to him, "It is highly commendable for one to undertake a well done job so others may emulate him, follow his example, or have the desire for the .creed." It thus deceives one through any means it can

The truth is that this happiness and energy are not prompted except by a heart disease with which this poor man is afflicted, while he considers his nafs as being sound, not sick. ,There is no hope that he will be healed. This wretch, in his innermost

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in his pith, in his conscience, loves to show people his deed while he is being unaware of it. Rather, he is demonstrating disobedience in the form of adoration, turning pretension into propagation for the creed. Although it is commendable that one performs what is recommended when he is by himself, why does the nafs always love to undertake it in public? It weeps for fear of Allāh in public congregations with energy and gladly, but when .alone, no matter how it tries, it cannot squeeze a drop out of the eye

Why does fear of Allāh take place only in congregations? One weeps and supplicates in the presence of thousands of people during the nights of Qadr, offering a hundred prostrations during his prayers, reciting the Greater Jawshan supplication and the smaller one as well as chapters from the Holy Qur'ān without feeling lazy, nor is he tired doing all of that. But if he prays ten rek'at in his solitude, he feels a back pain, and he is in such a bad shape! If the deeds that come up of an individual are prompted solely to win the Pleasure of Allāh Almighty, or to attain His mercy, or out of fear of His fire, or out of ?eagerness for Paradise, why should this individual love people to praise him for them

Why should he listen to their praise, directing his heart towards them so he may hear someone lauding him or saying that so-and-so is a man of

adoration, a worshipper who is keen to be in the forefront when the time of prayers comes, is mindful of what is commendable?! Or so he does so in order that he may hear someone saying that so-and-so, who performed the pilgrimage, is a trustworthy man, a man who can be reliable upon with regard to his transactions, etc.

If one looks forward to Allāh Almighty with anticipation, why should he care for all this profuse love [for public praise]? If [love for] paradise and [fear of] the fire are your catalyst to undertake this deed, why do you care for such love? So, be mindful lest this love should come from the branches of that bad tree, pretension, and try your best to repair what you can repair, and rid yourself of such love.

There is no harm in attracting attention to something in this regard which is: For each of these psychological conditions that are more than the good and the bad aspects, there are many levels. To be characterized by one of the good attributes while being dissociated from a level of bad attributes may be the specialty of those who know Allāh, who are friends of Allāh. As regarding the rest of people, they are as they are in their levels.

To be characterized by what is a shortcoming in the sight of the men of knowledge, of the friends of Allāh, does not seem to them [to these faulty persons] to be a shortcoming. Rather, it

may be perfection of a sort. Also, the merits of these individuals seem to be bad to the men of knowledge, to the friends of Allāh. Pretension, which we are discussing, is actually one of these attributes. Salvation from all its levels is the privilege of the friends of Allāh. .Others do not share them in it

The general public of people being characterized by one of its levels is not a shortcoming based on the station in which they are. It does not harm their conviction or sincerity. For example, the hearts of the general public, according to their nature, incline towards showing people what is good about them, even if they do not do so with the intention of showing off. But their souls by nature are inclined to such love, and this does not necessitate rendering the deed as void or describing them as unbelievers, hypocrites and polytheist, although this is surely a shortcoming in the sight of the friends of Allāh, a shirk, .a hypocrisy in the view of a friend of Allāh, or one who knows Allāh

To be totally free of absolute shirk, to be redeemed of all its levels, is the first station of the friends of Allāh who have other stations not suitable for elaboration here. The Infallible Ones, peace be with them, have said that their adoration is one of freemen's, that is, solely out of love for Allāh Almighty, neither coveting Paradise nor fearing hell. It is one of their

ordinary stations and the first degree of their mastership. There are for them, peace be .with them, in their adoration conditions which are beyond our comprehension

Based on what we have stated, a combination can be made of the tradition cited above and the Commander of the Faithful (peace (ص) transmitted from the Messenger of Allāh be with both of them), and the other tradition by Zurarah who cites Abū Ja'fer, peace be with him, as narrated by Muhammad ibn Yacoub who traces it back to Abū Ja'fer, peace be with him, saying, "I asked him about a man who does something good. Another sees it and is pleased with it. He said that there is no harm in it, that everyone loves to look in the ."eyes of people as a man of goodness unless he does something solely for this purpose

If one loves to be praised, he is regarded in one of the traditions as manifesting pretension, while in the other tradition the harm is removed when someone is pleased with something good coming out of his deed. The common denominator in the combination is the difference of opinion according to the status of the individuals. There is .another way to look at the combination of both traditions which we have overlooked

.Here the speech of our professor [al-Khomeini], may Allāh prolong his shade, ends

I say, perhaps the other way in combining both traditions is that the first tradition examines the love for praise at the time when a

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good deed is being done, and it is a mark of pretension. The other tradition examines love .for praise after a deed is already done

Or the love for praise in the first tradition is made as a mark of pretension, arranged by the other two marks, as is linguistically clear, especially since paying attention to the first marks (energy when people see a doer of good deed and laziness when he is by himself), and they must be observed together or separately so they may comprise a mark for pretension; otherwise, if one of them is supposed, say the energy when people see him and also when alone or laziness in both cases, it is definitely not a mark of pretension. If it is added to love for praise, it will definitely be a mark for pretension, a sure revelation of it, and this is contrary to praise alone, for it is not a mark of pretension as the second .tradition says

Or we may say that the first tradition means the pretender, because of being afflicted with the disease of pretension, loves people to praise him in all his affairs, as the tradition states. As for the second tradition, it is similar to partial obligation; it points out to the appearance of goodness from one when pleased; there is no harm so long as he did not do the deed for solely this purpose. Surely Allāh is the One Who knows best, and the last of our supplication is: Praise

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.to Allāh, the Lord of the Worlds

These sheets have been written down by the indigent, the one needs the mercy of his Lord, Sayyid Ahmed al-Fahri, on the twentieth day of the blessed Month of Ramadan in the city of Damascus in the year ۱۴۰۴ A.H.; with the one who undertook the migration may .be prayers and peace

A Dissertation about Conceit

In the Name of Allāh, the most Gracious, the most Merciful

Conceit

Before we start to explain the meaning of conceit, the damage it causes, its characteristics and how this contemptible case is treated, we ought to pave the way for all of that with some citations from the Qur'ān and the traditions of Ahl al-Bayt, peace be .with them all

Suffices to identify the significance of conceit and the calamity this contemptible case brings about, in the view of the Qur'ān, to read verses ۱۰۳ – ۱۰۵ of the blessed Chapter ,"The Cave", Al-Kahf, where Allāh, Praised is He, says

Say: 'Shall we tell you of those who lose the most with regard to their deeds, those" whose efforts have been wasted in this life, while they thought that they were acquiring good by their deeds? They are those who deny their Lord's Signs and the fact that they shall meet Him (in the hereafter): Their deeds will be in vain, nor shall We grant them any .(weight on the Day of Judgment" (Qur'ān, ۱۸:۱۰۳–۱۰۵

We derive from these sacred verses many interesting points on which we are not going to ,elaborate

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but we would only like to point out that conceit, according to these verses, becomes a cause for many good endeavors in this life to go to waste; it leads to disbelieving the Signs of Allāh and in meeting Him, a cause for voiding the good deeds; so, conceit spares no good deed whereby salvation is anticipated. For these reasons, the good deeds of the conceited ones will have no weight on the Judgment Day. This suffices as the destruction .caused by this case that brings loss

As regarding conceit according to traditions, the revered Al-Kāfi traces to Ali ibn Suwaid about conceit which ruins good deeds. The Imām (ع) asking the father of Imām al-Hassan said, "Conceit is of many levels. One of them is that the bad deed of a servant of Allāh (ع) is decorated for him, so he sees it as good and he likes it, thinking he is doing something good. Another level is when a servant believes in his Lord, so he thinks he has done Allāh ."Almighty a favor while Allāh is the one who bestowed His favor on him

is also cited as having said, "One who is absorbed by conceit perishes." Also (ع) The Imām he is cited as having said, "Someone sins then regrets. He does a good deed whereby he is pleased, so he relaxes his condition. It would have been better for him to maintain his is also quoted (ع) first status rather than enter into that." The Imām

as having said, "A scholar came to a worshipper and asked him about his prayers. The worshipper said, 'Should someone like me be asked about his prayers while I have been ?!'worshipping Allāh since such-and-such

He asked him about his tears. The man said to him, 'I cry till my tears pout out.' The scholar then said to him, 'Your laughter while being afraid is better than your weeping while you are thus bragging about it. Nothing of the good deed of a braggart is ever ."'raised

has said, "Three things are lethal: an obeyed miserliness, an (ص) The Messenger of Allāh has also said, "Had (ص) illicit desire that is followed, and one who is proud of himself." He you not sinned, I would have feared for you what is greater than sinning: conceit, ."conceit

Ibn Mas`ūd has said, "Perishing is brought about in two situations: despondency and conceit. It is when one loses hope for the mercy of Allāh, desponds from salvation, loses ."hope from self reform

Ibn Mas`ūd has combined both of these because one's happiness is pawned by his ,endeavor and serious effort in seeking it. The Almighty has said

.(man can have nothing but what he strives for" (Qur'ān, ۵۳:۳۹..."

Unless one energetically seeks his objective and original goal, he will never attain the sought happiness. Each of these two characteristics, despondency and conceit, plays a role in slowing down an effort towards one's goal, prohibiting one from seeking it as he ought to. As regarding despondency, the

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morale of the despondent person is not prepared to pursue his objective. One who desponds from reforming himself, so he is not energetic in order to save it, he may do .something that is faster in causing his perdition

One who desponds from reforming himself does not mind committing any wrongdoing; therefore, despondency from the broad mercy of Allāh is considered as one of the greatest sins. As for conceit, since the conceited person thinks he achieved his happiness .and won his objective and goal, he, too, stops his good endeavor and pursuit

In other words, man does not seek something which is already available rather than something which is impossible. Happiness in the eyes of the conceited person is already present, and in the eyes of the despondent person it is impossible. In this regard, we .contend ourselves with this much

Meaning of Conceit

Conceit means one sees and admires himself and his actions. It is a psychological condition which we sometimes find in ourselves. The meanings given to it, that have been mentioned in language books, mostly explain its requirements or consequences such as elation, arrogance, and denying what others hold against you as objectionable, according .to Al-Munjid

These meanings, as you can see, are among the requirements of the state which we mentioned in one's nafs. As regarding the idiomatic meaning for conceit, according to the definition of the scholars of mannerism, it is, according to some scholars of the hereafter, magnifying the blessing, taking it for granted while forgetting to

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.attribute it to the One Who bestowed it

Allama al-Majlisi, may Allāh sanctify his soul, has said that conceit is magnifying the good` deed, seeing it as plentiful. As regarding feeling pleased with it while feeling humble to the most Exalted One and thanking Him for enabling its doing, it is good, commendable.

I say that what this great traditionist has said, that is, conceited is "one who sees himself as not having fallen short of undertaking the deed", a reference to a particular conduct to which narrations have referred. Among such traditions is one recorded in the sacred book Al-Kāfi from the father of al-Hassan, namely Imām Mousa son of Ja'fer, peace be with both of them, who said once to one of his sons, "O son! You have to maintain your endeavor.

Do not ever think of yourself as having transcended the stage of falling short of perfecting your worship of Allāh, the most Exalted, the most Great, and are obeying Him, for Allāh is never adored as He should be." It is also as the Messenger of Allāh (ص) had said, being the best of all descendants of Adam, the one who is the best of them in his knowledge of Allāh, and the one who adored Him the best, addressing Him thus: "We did not know You as You ought to be known, nor did we adore You as You should rightly be adored." Al-Kāfi, too, cites Jābir [son of Abdullāh al-Ansāri] saying that the father of Imām

said to him, "O Jābir! May Allāh never get you out of the feeling of being (ع) Ja'fer ."neglectful and of being derelict in worshipping Allāh

The great traditionist, 'allama al-Majlisi, has quoted the knowledgeable critic, the great scholar, and the most revered mentor Bahā ad-Deen al-`Āmili, may Allāh be pleased with him, saying, "There is no doubt that if one does a righteous deed, such as fasting on certain days, spending the night praying and the like, feels happy about it. If he feels like that on account of these deeds being a boon from Allāh, a blessing from Him, the most Exalted One, upon him, while being afraid of their disappearance, pleading to Allāh to grant him more of them..., such feeling is not conceit. But if he thinks that they represent his own characteristic, that they are done by his person, being attributed to him, thinking much of them and feeling reliant upon them, seeing himself as being outside the limit of dereliction, having the attitude as if he is doing Allāh, Praise to Him, a favor because of ."them, such is conceit

Explanation by Imām Al-Khomeini

Imām al-Khomeini, may his shade prolong, has a viewpoint about this definition. He says :the following

The explanation of conceit according to what is mentioned by the greatest mentor Bahā" ad-Deen is correct, but the deed has to be examined more generally than just inwardly and outwardly, more generally than a good or an ugly deed, because conceit, just as it is ascertained by the

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.acts of the senses, it also is compared with the side actions, running them

Just as the person who has a commendable merit feels conceited, admiring his merit, so is the case with the one who has the bad characteristic, too, for he may also feel proud of himself or of his characteristic. It is as has been indicated in the sacred tradition which we in which (ع) mentioned as narrated by Ali son of Suwaid quoting the father of al-Hassan says, "... And among them is that the bad deed of a servant of Allāh is (ع) the Imām decorated for him, so he sees it good, and he feels proud of it, thinking that he is doing well. And among them is that a servant believes in his Lord, so he thinks he is thus doing .Allāh a favor

The reason why he mentioned these two is because they are hidden from the sight of most people, and so that people may also get to know that the good feeling and elation, which the Bahā'i mentor excludes from conceit and regards as good, is according to the ."type of one's attitude

The gist of the viewpoint of imām al-Khomeini with regard to the statement of the mentor :indicates three matters

First: The mentor, may Allāh have mercy on him, has specifically talked about conceit when someone feels conceited about his physical deeds, such as fasting during the time and praying during the night, and the like, and apparently his objective

from doing so is not the same as he had mentioned of the deeds of adoration, .benevolence, etc., not looking at the inward deeds

Conceit, as we have already stated, is found in the innate, the inwardly, deeds such as one feeling proud of his belief, which is an action relevant to the heart, an internal submission, feeling proud of his belief in the Messenger as though he feels he is doing Allāh and His Messenger a favor, as stated in the tradition quoted above. Thus, conceit is found in the inward characteristics and faculties such as conceit about knowledge, .courage, generosity, etc

Second: The mentor, may he be sanctified, specifically discussed conceit about side deeds, with regard to the good deeds, too, saying, "There is no doubt that one who does good deeds feels elated." The case is that conceit is not confined to the good deeds but it may also take place in the bad ones. Quite many unbelievers and hypocrites feel proud of .their unbelief and hypocrisy

Those whose faculties are mean are dragged into feeling proud of their bad characteristics as we, God willing, will mention. We have pointed out to all of this in the tradition cited above, which is the statement of the imām in which he says that a servant's bad deed is decorated for him, so he sees it as being good, and he likes it. Such is the result of Satan, the evil one, confusing him, and such is the bad nafs

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.decorated for man

Third: According to the imām's viewpoint with regard to the statement of the mentor, that is, the feeling of happiness and elation that happens to man upon doing some righteous deed, if it is according to what the mentor says, that is, with regard to such deeds being a boon from Allāh..., etc., such elation is not conceit. This pursuit, with regard to most .people, is according to its kind and is not applicable to all persons

There are individuals among people who are among the sincere worshippers of Allāh. They have gotten rid of the nafs and of its desires. Their eyes are too blinded to see their nafs in its entirety, so they do not see any deed for themselves except that they feel happy and pleased about it. They see their souls being owned by their real Owner; they have neither power nor might of their own. Their will is fused into the will of Allāh. They :are described by this verse

Allāh sets forth the parable (of two men: one) a slave in the service of another; he has no" power of any sort, while (the other) a man on whom We have bestowed goodly favors from Us, and he spends (freely) of it, privately and publicly: Are the two equal? (By no .(means;) praise be to Allāh. But most of them do not understand" (Qur'ān, ١۶:٧۵

:They are the testimony to this verse of the Almighty

[They are (but) servants [whose status is"

.(raised to honor [and distinction]" (Qur'ān, ۲۱:۲۶

These are the sincere ones who, when being heedless about Allāh and cast a look at their good deed, they find happiness and pleasure, whereupon they seek forgiveness of Allāh for such a sentiment despite their lofty status with Allāh, for the good deeds of the kind .ones are the bad deeds of those close to Him

Degrees and Levels of Conceit

As we have quoted from the imām, may his blessings endure, about pretension, that is, it has three levels, and each level has two degrees the explanation of which has already .been indicated, so is the case with conceit; it, too, has the same levels and degrees

The first level is conceit about beliefs. The second is conceit about the faculties. The third level is conceit about deeds. The first level has two degrees: the first is conceit about belief and true branches of knowledge. The second degree, in contrast, is conceit about disbelief, apostasy and inward beliefs. The second level, too, has two degrees: The first is conceit about good faculties and commendable merits. The second, in contrast, is conceit about bad manners and ugly faculties. The third level, too, has two degrees: conceit about the good deeds. Contrasting the second degree is conceit about ugly deeds and .wrongdoings

Levels of Conceit

A scholar of the hereafter has divided conceit into two levels. The conclusion of what he says, with some explanation from our part, is this: Conceit exists in man for a merit the owner of

which sees it as a mark of perfection, there is no doubt about it, and everyone considers himself, in his innermost, as being complete, whether in his knowledge, or wealth, or all other forms of perfection. He, hence, goes through conditions, including fear of losing these perfections, fear of being robbed of that perfection as a whole or in part, or a shortcoming happens to him which spoils his purity. This condition is not described as .making anyone wonder

Also among them is that he does not fear its disappearance, but he feels elated about this perfection, so much so that he sees it as a blessing from Allāh Almighty; he renders it to the Almighty, not to himself; such elation and pleasure about perfection is not conceit, .either

But man has a third status which is labeled as conceit. He is not concerned about the disappearance of perfection but feels elated about its existence, and he feels glad about it. At the same time, his heart becomes attached to it, and he is happy because it is perfection and eminence, not due to its attribution to the Truthful One, the Almighty, not .one of His boons, and he has neither independence nor a principle for this perfection

If he believes in his heart that this perfection is a blessing from Allāh, that the Almighty can take it away from him whenever He wishes, such a feeling leaves no room for conceit to find its way to his heart. If we suppose

there is conceit in him, such a belief, the remembrance that Allāh, the most Praised One, can take it away from him whenever He wills, removes conceit from his heart.

Based on all of this, conceit is that one looks with magnifying glasses at a blessing and perfection for his own self, and his heart becomes attached to it, forgetting to attribute it to the True Giver of Boons. Such a condition is the first level of conceit. If he rises from this condition and sees it in his heart as though Allāh Almighty owes him a favor, that he has a status and nearness to Him, he expects Allāh Almighty to grant him eminence in the life of this world as a reward for his [righteous] deed. And if something wrong happens to him, he goes further in his attitude to the extent that if this wrong happens to a debauchee, it would not have been far-fetched in his view in this goal; this status is called flirtation and coquetry.

For example, it may coincide that he gives someone something. He magnifies this giving in his view and considers himself as having done that someone a favor. This person admires his giving. If he employs the same person to whom he gave something, and if he rests his hopes on getting something out of him, thinking it far-fetched that this person would disagree with him, this condition is called flirtation and coquetry, and it is a higher level than conceit.

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.In every case of flirtation, conceit exists, and not the contrary

Conceit can exist through the sentiment of flirtation because the balance and the criterion in conceit is over-estimating a deed and forgetting the blessing without expecting a reward. As regarding flirtation, it accompanies the expectation for the greatest reward. If one expects Allāh, Praise to Him, to definitely respond to his supplication, having no inner thoughts of being rejected, he will be surprised if his supplication is not honored. He does not ask himself why his supplication is not honored. Or he is not surprised when the supplication of a debauchee is not honored, but he is surprised when his own supplication is not honored! This poor person, in addition to his conceit, is flirting with Allāh Almighty, (too.(۱

Be informed that conceit, in each of the previous levels, has [sub] levels some of which are obvious: One goes in its direction without being aware of it, without noticing. And some of them are minute, quite thin to the extent that unless one fully examines, he will not know accurately nor realize properly. Also, some of its levels are more intense and causing .more perdition than others

:First Level

It is the highest of all, and it does the most harm. It is a condition found in man because of intense conceit, so intense it is that he considers himself as doing a favor to the One Who bestows His favors on him, the King of Kings, on account of his

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There is a reference to this in the "Opening Supplication" (du'a al-iftitāh). It states the -۱ following: "... so I became supplicating to You feeling secure, asking You, feeling close to You, neither afraid nor being apprehensive, flirting with that for which I seek You; so, if ."Your response is slow, I remonstrate with You due to my own ignorance..., etc

belief or other merits. He claims his merits have created, through his conviction, an expansion in the domain of the Truthful One, the most Exalted One, creating dissemination of His creed, that he, because of promoting the Sharī`a, or due to his instruction and guidance, or his enjoining what is right and forbidding what is wrong, or by his safeguarding His limits, or because of his prayer niche and pulpit…, he created in .Allāh's creed freshness

Or it is because of his attendance at the congregations of the Muslims, or his holding that the creed has ,(ع) mourning congregations for Abū Abdullāh, Imām al-Hussain enjoyed promotion which he feels he thus has done the Almighty, His Honored Messenger and the Master of Martyrs a favor, even if such a thought did not surface, he .thinks it in his mind, inwardly

From this door comes the attitude of someone doing a favor to the servants of Allāh in the religious matters such as one offering obligatory and commendable charities, his assistance to the weak and the poor. So he feels he has done them a favor, and this attitude may be hidden even from his own self, too. (An explanation of people having done no favor to the Almighty, but that Allāh does them favors, has already been made .(before in the discussion of pretension

:Second Level

It is when one flirts with Allāh Almighty through the intensity of conceit in his heart. This flirtation is different from the feeling of having

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obliged, although some scholars do not differentiate between them. A person filling this category claims he is loved by Allāh Almighty, considering such love to be extended to .those who are close to him and to those who preceded him

When one of the friends of Allāh is mentioned by name, or when a talk goes on about those who are loved by Allāh or who love Allāh or the one on such a path who attracts others to Him, one of them feels in his heart that he is one of them. Pretension may humble itself and appears to be different from that. Or, in order one may confirm such a station for himself, one may deny it in a way when the denial is akin to confirming! If Allāh afflicts him with an affliction, he will then beat the drum of "only friends [of Allāh] are ".afflicted

Those who claim that they offer guidance to others, the men of knowledge, the Sufis, the .men who study behavior and mathematics, are all closer to this danger than all others

:Third Level

This is the level of one who sees himself as demanding his right from Allāh on account of his conviction, or merits, or deeds which he sees as worthy of rewards, obligating Allāh Almighty to strengthen him in the life of this world and get him to reach the stations in the .Hereafter. He believes he is a sincere believer

When the believers are reminded of the unknown, he sticks

his head out among others, imagining he is worthy of rewards even if Allāh, Praise to Him, treats him with justice. Rather, he increases the ugliness of his rudeness, so he speaks out this false statement. If he is afflicted and something wrong happens to him, he objects to Allāh in his heart, wondering about the actions of the Just Almighty, how He afflicts the pure believer and sustains the hypocritical sinner. He, hence, is angry at heart .with the Truthful One, the Almighty, because of his own estimates

He feigns acceptance, demonstrating [in reality] his anger with the One Who bestows the blessings on him, pretending to others that he accepts destiny. If he hears that Allāh, Praise to Him, afflicts the believers in the life of this world, he solaces his heart with such a thought, not knowing that the hypocrites who are tested in this life are numerous, and not .everyone who is afflicted is a believer

:Fourth Level

Here, one sees himself as being distinguished from all others, better than all other believers on account of the basis of his belief, by the good characteristics, than those who do not have them, by doing what is obligatory and abandoning what is prohibitive compared to the contrary. He sees himself as being more perfect than all other people, that he performs what is commendable, regularly attending Friday services, the .congregational prayer services and all other rituals, abandoning all contemptible acts

He attributes to himself a distinction, depending on

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his own self, belief and deeds, looking at all other beings as nothing, as incomplete, looking at people askance. He inwardly or outwardly taunts the servants of Allāh, keeping away everyone from the gate of the mercy of Allāh through some means, keeping His mercy just to himself and to groups similar to him. The individual who occupies this station reaches a degree where he discusses the good deeds of people, no matter how high they may be, belittling their deeds in his heart or in some other way, raising the standard of his .own deeds above such belittling, purifying them from such discussion

The good deeds of people he sees as nothing. If he does the same deeds, he magnifies them. He realizes the tiny faults in people very well while not realizing his own fault, .overlooking it

These are the marks of conceit even when one is indifferent to them. Conceit has other .degrees which I have not stated, and I am certainly unaware of some of them

.Here, his speech, may Allāh prolong his shade, ends

:Comment

What the imām, may his shade prolong, has said about conceit according to the beliefs, the faculties and the deeds, is not confined to the good beliefs. Rather, conceit is found in false beliefs, in ugly faculties, in wrong deeds, too. Perhaps this is far-fetched according to some, for how can one become conceited about his disbelief, hypocrisy, bad faculties and disobedience of Allāh, Praise to Him?! But let him be informed that

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Allāh, the Praised One, created the human nature as it is: containing the status of being .accustomed to something

If it undertakes a deed more than once, whether this deed belongs to those of the five senses or of the innermost, it likes it and becomes used to it. This status in the soul is one of Allāh's major paths and important factors for uplifting and heading towards perfection. This is so because a good deed, likewise, in earning the stations and virtuous beliefs, may seem to be a problem for the individuals in the beginning, and they require tolerance for .hardships and exercises

But if they are followed by a period of time during which they become accustomed to them, the hardship and difficulty will be removed from it. (Doing something good is a habit, and also a habit is doing evil things). From the standpoint of this status found in the soul, some great men who delved into the meaning of verses referring to torment and to eternity in the fire determined by Allāh, Praise to Him, to the unbelievers and polytheists, is derived from some principles of knowledge and philosophy which we are not here to .discuss

Those who remain tortured for some time reach a state when they feel accustomed to their environment; they become used to it; they are not bored by it. Perhaps this sacred :verse is useful to cite in this regard

As often as their skins are roasted through, We shall change"

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.(them for fresh skins (so) that they may taste the penalty" (Qur'ān, ۴:۵۶

This verse supports our argument about the people of the fire particularly if we pay attention to the phrase "... (so) that they may taste the penalty...". Anyway, we have no knowledge of the facts relevant to the conditions of the world of the hereafter and its horrors, and we must not measure the conditions of that world according to our own: this .one

But it is taken for granted that the soul has the ability to get used to something in this world, that it feels comfortable with any action which it does repeatedly and which the heart likes and gets attached to. If one loves something, this love becomes a barrier :between him and seeing the faults of that thing just as this verse of poetry says

,The pleased eyes are too tired to reach a fault

.But the eye of wrath reveals all the faults

Based on what we have stated when we quoted the imām, may Allāh prolong his shade, that is, the unbelievers, the hypocrites, the unbelievers, those whose manners are contemptible, those whose desires are low, and those who commit transgressions and sins, may all be dragged to admire their disbelief, sins, bad manners and ugly deeds. They may even feel good about them, seeing themselves as having free spirits, revolting .against tradition, not believing in whims

They think that they have the manliness and courage, that belief in the Almighty is a ,whim

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that adherence to the legislated religious laws is an indication of shortsightedness, that the good manners and virtuous wishes stem from weak souls, considering adherence to obligations and forms of worship as signs of weak comprehension and a shortcoming of .feelings

They see themselves from a standpoint as bearing free spirits that are not complicated by whims, not caring about the religious laws but worthy of praise and lauding. All of this is due to the low characteristics setting deep roots within them, and they have become .comfortable with them

They [their faults and sins] look good in their own eyes, so they consider them as signs of perfection as referred to in a sacred tradition in Al-Kāfi from Ali ibn Suwaid from Abul-Hassan, peace be with him, who has said, "Conceit comes in degrees. Among them is the servant of the Almighty sees his bad deed decorated, so he sees it as good, and he ,admires it, thinking he is doing something good. The Almighty has said

Say: Shall we tell you of those who lose most in respect of their deeds, those whose' efforts have been wasted in this life, while they think that they are acquiring good by their deeds? They are those who deny their Lord's Signs and the fact of their having to meet Him (in the hereafter): Their deeds will be in vain, nor shall We grant them any weight on .(the Day of Judgment'" (Qur'ān, ١٨:١٠٣-۵

The imām, may his shade endure, says the

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following about those who admire their false beliefs, low desires and ugly deeds: "This group of people includes those who consider themselves as men of knowledge while they are ignorant and the most poor and wretch of all. Doctors of psychology are unable to treat them. Advising and admonishing them have no effect on them; rather, the effect may reflect contrarily on them. These do not listen to proofs; they close their ears and visions against the guidance of the prophets, the evidence of the wise, the admonishment .of the scholars

One, therefore, has to seek refuge with Allāh, Praise to Him, against the evil of the nafs and its schemes: It drags man from transgression to apostasy, and from apostasy to admiration of apostasy. The nafs and Satan, because of underestimating some .transgression in the sight of man, afflict him with such transgression

Once the transgression sets root in the heart, and once it is taken lightly, one is afflicted with a greater transgression by one degree. After its repetition, this, too, falls down in his sight. He underestimates it and commits one greater than it, and so on he progresses in committing transgressions: one step after another. The major transgressions get minimized in his eyes gradually till all the transgressions become unimportant to him. The religious laws, the divine and the prophetic way shrink in his view, so he is dragged into .apostasy, disbelief and admiration of them both." Here ends the speech of the imām

I say that

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this precious statement and practical piece of wisdom, which we have just cited from the great teacher of manners, may his shade prolong, is one of the unique practical pieces of wisdom and lessons of moral cultivation. The magnanimity of a transgression and sin may fall in the sight of one who commits it as a result of repetition. If transgression, from which we seek refuge with Allāh, becomes something ordinary and not ugly, nobody can .imagine there will be a limit for it where one will stop

Someone whom I trust from among my believing brethren told me once that he was in the presence of one of those who use usury and who trade in it, and that man's hand was shaking, uncontrollable. But this person, as a result of repeating his prohibitive deed, .(became the first person to take usury in the market of Kermanshah (now Bakhtaran

The greatest calamity is that this state of being "daring" about transgression causes darkness in the heart that gradually puts out the noor of conviction, so one will find in himself doubt and hesitation with regard to true beliefs. If he does not properly repent and treat this detrimental ailment, he may be dragged as he draws his last breath from life and in the stupor that happens to him at the time of death to putting out the noor of .conviction in his heart in its entirety

.He goes from this world in a state of disbelief in Allāh Almighty

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If his condition becomes like that, there will be no hope at all for his salvation. The gates of happiness will be closed from all sides. A reference has been made to this in verses and ,traditions. The Almighty has said

In the long run, the end of those who do evil will be extremely evil because they rejected" .(God's Signs and held them with ridicule" (Qur'ān, ۸۳:۱۴

In the books of tradition, the effect of sinning in the heart is described as the black spot that keeps getting larger as one keeps repeatedly sinning till it completely encircles it. Abū is also cited in traditions as having said, "Every servant of Allāh has a white spot (ع) Ja'far in his heart. When he commits a sin, a block spot comes out of it. When he repents, that blackness disappears. If he gets deeper into sinning, that blackness increases till it over-covers the whiteness, and the person will never return to anything good." This is the :meaning of this verse

By no means! But the stain of the (ill) that they do is on their hearts on account of what" .(they used to earn" (Qur'ān, ۸۳:۱۴

Consequences of Conceit

:There are many consequences and harms of conceit, and their list is as follows

pride .۱

forgetting a sin and underestimating it .۲

deprivation of the benefits of admonishment and guidance .۳

indifference to people's ways of harm .۴

non-belief in the mercy and favor of Allāh .۵

;Any of these consequences suffices to render one's perdition and suffering

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?!so, what would you say about all of them combined

:Pride

As regarding pride being one of the outcomes of conceit, it is so because both of these characteristics have one and the same root. In other words, if one is conceited and arrogant, and when one sees himself as being great, his heart's eye will be too blind to see the faults and shortcomings in him. In this case, if he wants to show someone the condition of looking at his own self greatly, demonstrating the greatness status, he will .then be afflicted by the dangerous ailment of pride

In other words, the condition of conceit and of one who considers himself to be greater than others, so long as it stays inwardly and has no outward manifestation, it is pride. If it gets out through the senses, it is called arrogance. Both conditions, pride and arrogance, need another person besides the individual himself so the latter may see himself inwardly .and innately as being greater than others; it is then that one is characterized by pride

Or he may demonstrate his attitude of thinking he is greater than others to everyone else, hence this person becomes characterized by pride. At any rate, pride and arrogance need the other party. Not all pride is like that. This is the difference between conceit and pride. A conceited person sees himself and his deeds as being great without discerning the others. That is, if we suppose there is nobody who is not

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conceited, and that Allāh, Praise to Him, did not create anyone else besides him, so he lives by himself, he can be imagined as being arrogant. The arrogant person is at the verge of the hell of pride. When he finds someone to whom he can demonstrate his pride, he will then be afflicted with pride and arrogance, and his abode will be hell as is clearly :stated in the Holy Qur'ān in this verse

.(Is there no abode in Hell for the haughty?" (Qur'ān, ۳۹:۶۰..."

This is one of the dangerous detriments that await the proud. Therefore, all the detriments and afflictions resulting from the sinning characteristic of "pride" can apply to .conceit, too; may Allāh grant us refuge from it

Forgetting about and Underestimating Sins

Conceit causes one to forget many sins which he committed in the claim that he does not need to reform himself, so he does not mend what he had broken. As a result for this heedlessness, he forgets many sins, and he is not concerned about the sins which he still .remembers. This condition may drag one into committing new sins

Perhaps this is the meaning referred to in a tradition quoted in Wasāil al-Shī'a from Imām in a tradition in which Mousa (Moses) (ص) who cites the Messenger of Allāh (ع) al-Sādiq son of Imran (Amram) asks Satan, "Tell me about the sin which, when a son of Adam commits, you overtake him." Satan said, "It is when he is proud of himself, thinks too

."much of his good deeds and his sin looks small in his eyes

It is known that when Satan overtakes someone, the result will be more sinning, in addition to underestimating the sin, for this by itself is an insult to the status of the divine greatness which is one of the greatest sins, and it may stop one from being included in the divine mercy, as some traditions point out. In the sacred book Al-Kāfi where Zaid the saying that Abū Abdullāh said that he had heard (ع) cooking oil seller cites Imām al-Sādiq saying, "One of the sins which are not forgiven is when a man says, (ع) Abū Muhammad 'Blessed am I had I only not done anything other than this [deed]!" Abū Hashim al-Ja`fari saying, (ع) saying that he heard Abū Muhammad (ع) quotes Imām al-Hassan al-`Askari "Among the sins that are not forgiven is one saying, 'I wish I would not be held !["accountable except for only this [deed

Imām al-Khomeini, the mentor, may I be his sacrifice, has explained that conceit obliterates belief and ruins the rewards for the good deeds, according to a tradition narrated by Ali ibn Suwaid. The imām was asked about the conceit that spoils good deeds, so the imām explained some of its degrees, citing other traditions as well, in this regard. :He said the following

The conceit tree is bad; its fruit is many major sins and abominations. When its root rests" in the heart, one's affair is dragged into

disbelief and shirk and more than both of these. One of its consequences is underestimating sins; rather, one who is conceited is not in the process of reforming himself claims it is pure and purified. He does not care at any time to purge himself of the filth of committing offenses. The thick curtain of conceit blocks him from seeing his own ills. This catastrophe stops one from achieving perfections, afflicts him with all sorts of shortcomings, brings about eternal perdition, and the doctors of the psyche can find no ."cure for him

Deprivation from benefits of Admonition and Guidance

One of the problems with conceit with which one is afflicted as a result of this psychological disease, and as a result of one believing in his own superiority over others and the status which he has with Allāh, he regards others as ignorant, seeing no value for their viewpoint. As a result for this condition, he accepts neither advice from any adviser nor any admonishment from any preacher. One who is deprived of the abundant benefits .of admonishment, both the nafs and Satan have a free hand in tempting him

There is a great deal of emphasis in traditions, statements of great men, poets and wise men, on the company of the folks of righteousness and on being in contact with scholars, so much so that even looking at the face of a scholar is adoration, and looking at his house door is adoration, according to traditions. On one hand, the nafs and Satan find

no room to tempt him because, as a result of keeping the scholars and the wise company, he becomes keenly aware of his faults, seeing himself as being derelict on the path .towards Allāh

But if he stops keeping them company, he will be surrounded with detriments, and he becomes unaware of his faults, so he stops seeking his pursuit, claiming he has already achieved his pursuit and no longer needs to exert any effort. One whose condition is like .that is definitely going to perish and will imminently fall

Imām al-Khomeini, may his blessings endure, says that among the harms of conceit is that one looks askance at Allāh's servants, seeing their good deeds as nothing even if they may be better than his own; this, too, is one of the paths towards the annihilation of .man and thorns on his path

Unawareness of the Servants' Detriments

Among the perils of conceit is that instead of one seeing his faults and shortcomings, he becomes too blind to see these, so he does not examine his deeds, nor does he ascertain his acts of worship. If the nafs and Satan find their ways to him through other venues such as pretension and others, one may treat himself before it is too late. But due to this disease [of conceit], one may not correct the conditions required for the soundness of his rituals and acts of adoration, so his good deeds and worship become void even according to obvious religious laws and according to the verdicts

.of scholars of the Sharī`a

But since he admires his good deeds, he does not look for such verdicts so he may apply them to the sacred rites. The poor man finds himself in a situation in which the adoration of as long as fifty years of his lifespan is void and was not correct even in a way where he can repeat them and make up for them. What a fault is greater than one being unaware says, "Suffices one for a fault is that he sees (ص) of seeing his faults?! The Prophet (ع) people's faults while being too blind to see his own." Imām Ali bin Muhammad al-Hadi ."has said, "One who is pleased with himself will find many who are displeased with him

Lord! Enable us to see our faults so such vision may be one of the marks of Your love for us. He, peace be with him, has said, "If Allāh loves a servant, He enables him to see his ."own faults

Not Believing in Allah's Mercy and Favor

One of the harms of conceit is that it weakens one's reliance on the favor of Allāh, the most Blessed, the most Exalted. Those who admire their deeds fall into a severe darkness and peril, so much so that if one mentions one of the favors of Allāh and His infinite mercy, they deny it, as if they love that Allāh, Praise to Him and Exaltation, deals with His servants according to His justice, so these admirers may be the ones who

receive salvation, according to their claim, and their endeavor in undertaking good deeds .will not go to waste

In other words, the ailment of conceit creates in the conceited persons the ailment of envy, too. If we apply an impossible supposition, that is, if they are saved through Allāh's justice, they do not wish the rest of people to be saved through His favor. Although they are deeply immersed in sins, nay, they are the personification of sins and offenses, if these individuals hear someone saying that Allāh, Praise to Him, forgives whomsoever He pleases and pays no attention to anyone, nor is He concerned about him, instead of being pleased and happy with such a statement, they may deny it inwardly though they may not .articulate it

They thus object to Allāh about why the Praised One should thus forgive! In fact, [according to them] He does not forgive, because if he forgives others, what is the difference between them, those who exhausted themselves on the paths of asceticism and adoration, and those who did not? They are as the Commander of the Faithful (ع) described: "He fears for others on account of what is less than his own sin, hoping to get more than his deed [is worthy of], magnifying the offense of others while underestimating what he himself commits. He magnifies his acts of obedience while underestimating the ."same when done by others

As a result of this disease, the admirers reject most narratives on the side of

especially with regard to their Shi'ites. They either ,(ع) anticipation narrated by Ahl al-Bayt reject them or interpret them with some of their own views and interpretation. For this :there are many evidences. We would like to state one of them as an example

The great master, Ibn Tawoos, may Allāh be pleased with him, has stated in his book, Al-about the virtue of the Ghadīr Day. (ع) Iqbāl, a tradition from Imām Ali ibn Mousa al-Rida In it, the following is stated: "Allāh orders in it the honored scribes not to record the sins of those who love and follow Ahl al-Bayt for three days starting on the Ghadīr Day, not to record any of their sins in honor of Muhammad, Ali, and the Imāms (peace be with them), ."all of them

This tradition is one of hundreds of similar ones the recording en masse from Ahl al-Bayt is definitive, and they have a sequentially narrated meaning, but they are heavy on the taste of those among the worshippers and ascetics who think that they are holy and who admire their deeds, so they cast doubt about them under the guise of defending the creed. They say that such narratives permit some people to commit offenses during the .three Ghadīr days, relying on this narrative

In making such a statement, they really are not concerned about the creed; rather, the root of this confusion, as we pointed out, is the disease of conceit. Since they rely on their deeds, seeing themselves as

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being in no need for divine care, they feign sorrow for the creed. But they doubt a man of divinity and spirituality, such as Ibn Tawoos, who has a moral contact with the supreme spiritual kingdom, something which is admitted by all scholars and great Muslims, and the same doubt they apply to the great traditionist, al-Majlisi, and other great men of the .creed

But their sectarian fanaticism is actually much greater than their concern. They believe they definitely protect the creed more than these holy men. But these men have recorded this tradition and similar ones in their books and were not concerned about some readers having the "courage" to charge them with offense. These "nurses that are more merciful than the mothers", or the branches that are superfluous to the main root, defend the sanctities of the creed. They claim the recording of this tradition and its likes causes .people to dare to transgress

These vain claimants must be told that the curtain of seeing the soul and its adoration obstructs belief in these facts; otherwise, there is no room to dislike such narratives, and there is no room for confusion. What, then, is the difference between a written sin being forgiven and not being written in the first place? Are there no clear verses and consecutively reported narratives that say that Allāh Almighty forgives all sins, including the sin of shirk when combined with repentance, if He wills, even if one sinned for seventy ?years

The One

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Who forgives the sins of seventy years and wipes them out through a signal from Him, the most Exalted One, does not only wipe out sins but, according to the manifestation of the attribute of "O One Who changes wrong deeds with good deeds!", replaces a sin with a good deed. Allāh changes their sins into good deeds... Should such obvious verses and ?!authentic narratives cause people to dare to sin, let that narrative, too, be as such

Any answer which you provide about these verses and narratives we respond to it by contrasting it with this narrative, and what we have stated underscores the scholarly .term

is during (ع) As for the resolving answer and analysis in the issue, one who truly loves Ali the Ghadīr days immersed in an ocean of happiness and elation. Just as one who is immersed in the sea, surrounded by the tumultuous sea waves does not accept any outside filth, nor does filth affect him nor makes him dirty, in the sense that water overwhelms him and surrounds him from all sides, so it does not permit filth to bear any .impact on him..., so is the case with the Ghadīr days

They do not permit room for offense's impact which is in the sense of writing and by (ع) confirming, nor does it necessitate crossing the borders, either: One who loves Ali instinct shies away from transgressing. If a sin is committed by him, it is by virtue of the .overpowering nature and external obstacles

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He, having committed a sin, even during committing a sin, is ashamed of it, regretting it, which is one of the important factors for the sin having no effect and necessitating Allāh's forgiveness, not only during those three days but in all days, during the entire life-span. The reality of repentance is nothing but this. Repentance is regret, and this is what our Lord, the Almighty, has decreed. Anyone who does not accept Allāh's decrees and rulings .can do whatever he wants, whatever he can

Based on the above, there is no room in the narrative for any direction, for any affectation, which has been committed by some of those who say that this narrative and its likes is negative because the subject rejects such a conclusion in the sense that one during these days commits no sin. Or, as some have committed, (ع) who loves Ali according to what has been transmitted by observers from among the sects of the difference between a sin and an offense, it is said that the offense is the one that is not .recorded. As for the sin, it is recorded

Based on this trend, they had a problem passing a judgment on al-Majlisi, criticizing him for having interpreted the offenses referred to in the narrative as the sins in his book Zād al-Ma۱ād. The summary of what they say is that they made a distinction between the offense and the sin. They say that the transgression is the sin that is done on

.purpose, while the offense is the sin that is done unintentionally, unwillingly

What is stated in the narrative is that what is not recorded during the three Ghadīr days is the offense, the sin that is done unintentionally, unwillingly, not the transgression that is pre-meditated, done on purpose, pre-determined, for it is called a sin, not an offense. But this distinction is unnecessary absurdity because a "sin" in the books of language means the absolute transgression, whether it is on purpose or without. But there is disagreement about the offense: Is it the absolute sin undertaken on purpose, as is stated in Al-Munjid? In the latter reference, this text exists: "An offense is a sin, and some ."say it is done deliberately

The same exists in Muntaha al-Arab; so, one can refer to them if he wishes. What is added to the above is derived from its linguistic meaning. This term, the offense, is used in the Qur'ān in more than twenty places, and most of these places cannot convey the :sense of a sin done unintentionally or unwillingly such as these verses of the Almighty

Nor does he have any food except the corruption from the washing of wounds which..." ;"none eat except those in sin" (Qur'ān, ۳۶-۳۷(

And Pharaoh, and those before him, and the overthrown cities, all committed habitual..." ;sin" (Qur'ān, ۶۹:۹); "... A lying, sinful forelock!" (Qur'ān, ۹۶:۱۶(

Surely those who seek gain in evil and are engulfed in their sins are the companions"

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(;of the Fire: they shall dwell in it (forever)" (Qur'ān, ٢:٨١

Because of their sins, they were drowned and were made to enter the Fire (for" .(punishment)" (Qur'ān, ٧١:٢٥

So, how can all these places where Allāh, Praised is He, makes such strong threats convey the meaning that an offense is the sin that is done unintentionally or unwillingly?! How could Pharaoh or the people of Noah or other sinners have committed their sins ?!unwillingly, unintentionally

Even if you overlook all of these, what is the meaning of forgiveness for an offense that is done unintentionally or unwillingly during these three days although the narrative refers to a status of gratitude, whereas such forgiveness is not restricted to it? It is apparent .that these trends and explanations are unacceptable

They remind one of the Persian axiom which says, "... like one who composes poetry but is unable to come up with a rhyme scheme!" The imām of the nation, the leader of the Islamic revolution, imām al-Khomeini, may his blessings endure, has made statements on the occasion of the narratives cited about the virtue of weeping out of fear of Allāh which :I would like to quote for more benefit

Statement in Point by Imam Khomeini

:The imām, may his shade endure, says the following

What has to be pointed out is that some of those with weak souls, those whose souls are" not at ease, cast doubt about many rewards received for partial matters, being indifferent to the fact that if something seems small in

our eyes in the life of this world, it does not mean that its image in the world of the unknown and in the angelic world is also small and insignificant. Perhaps a small being may have in its domain and inwardly the perfection of greatness and glory.

The sacred physique and the bodily form of the Honored Prophet, the seal of prophets, the revered Prophet and the great one, peace of Allāh be with him and his progeny, was one of the small existents in this world, but his holy soul surrounded the domain and the angelic kingdom and was the cause for the existence of the heavens and the earth. Passing a judgment about the "insignificance" and the small size of something according to its hidden and angelic image is a branch of knowledge of the angelic world and of the hidden things, and people like us have no right to make such a judgment.

We have to open our eyes and ears to the words of the scholars of the hereafter world, I mean the prophets and friends of Allāh, peace be with them all. Moreover, that world is based on the Almighty bestowing His favors and infinite mercy, while there is neither an end nor a limit to Allāh's favors. Absolute exclusion from the favor of the most Generous One Who has the infinite mercy originates from extreme ignorance, for all these blessings which He has bestowed upon His servants and which the minds are too

incapable of and are too puzzled to count, all came into being without anyone asking for .or being worthy of

So, what is the objection if He bestows many times as many as these boons unto His servants without precedence? Is this too much to expect in a world that was built on the :influence of the human will and about which the following verse was revealed

There will be all that the souls could desire there, all that the eyes could delight in"" ,((Qur'ān, ۴٣:٧١

despite man's desires having neither an end nor a measure?! Allāh, the most Blessed and Exalted One, determined that world and the human will so as man would exist according .to His mere will

So, my dear one, the narratives and the sacred traditions for these boons are not just" one or two or ten so one may have room to deny them. Rather, they are beyond the limit of being consecutively reported, and all the reliable books of traditions are filled with such quotations. These are similar to one hearing with his own ears from the Infallible Ones, .peace be with them, and they allow no room for interpretation

Such a requirement is in total agreement with the consecutively reported texts and not in collision with the evidence, but in agreement with it, backed by evidence. Denying it is a proof for the weakness of one's conviction and an indication of his extreme ignorance. One has to unhesitatingly accept the statements of the prophets

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and friends of Allāh, peace be with them, and there is nothing better than man submitting to the masters of the truth, especially in the matters where reason cannot reveal, nor is there a way to comprehend them except through the venue of inspiration and message.

If man wants to insert his small mind, his whims and thoughts, in the unknown and the worship matters of the Sharī`a, he will end up denying what is generally accepted and what is necessary. He will gradually be dragged from what is few to what is many, from what is low to what is high. If we suppose that you cast doubts about these narratives and their isnād, although there is no room in them for denial, you will be casting doubt about the Glorious Divine Book, the heavenly sacred Qur'ān, for it has many such rewards. An example is this verse:

"The night of power is better than a thousand months" (Qur'ān, ۹۷:۳),

and like this verse:

"The parable of those who spend their substance in the way of Allāh is that of a kernel of corn: It grows seven ears, and each ear has a hundred kernels. Allāh gives manifold increase to whomsoever He pleases" (Qur'ān, ۲:۲۶۱).

In my opinion, I the writer, one of the reasons for these exclusions and denials is conceit and the magnifying of deeds. For example, if someone fasts for one day or spends the entire night in adoration, then he hears that there are great

rewards for his deed, he will not think it as being far-fetched. Also, this by itself exists had the deed had its own reward, but he magnifies his deed, admires it, so he believes there is .such a reward

My dear one: "If we suppose that we, in all our lifespan, say fifty or sixty years," undertook all the obligations stated in the Sharī`a, then we moved from this life with a sound belief, with good deeds and sound repentance, what is the measure of the reward for our righteous deeds and conviction? According to the Book and the Sunnah as well as the consensus of all sects, such an individual receives the mercy of the Truthful One, the most Exalted, and he enters Paradise with which he is promised, a garden in which he will ".remain eternally in bliss and ease, in everlasting mercy, tranquility and fragrance

Is there room in this for denial, had the basis been the reward for the good deed? Let us erroneously suppose that our righteous deeds are worthy of being rewarded, the reward of this person will be hardly imaginable in quantity and quality. It is understood from this that the matter is based on another premise and revolves on another axis; so, there is no ."room for exclusion, and there is no venue opening for denial

Here ends his statement, may his shade prolong: "Among the other harms of conceit is that it forces the conceited person to be pretentious. This is so

because demonstrating what is beautiful of the human instincts and stopping to show off one's beauty is very difficult, just as difficult as it is for a hungry and thirsty person not to eat and drink. The men of knowledge, those who are giants in this field, have very interesting situations and made very precise statements, but it is not suitable to quote them here.

This sense does not distinguish between true beauty and an imagined, fake one. One who admires his deeds, since they look good in his eyes, and since the deeds which he does must be shown to others, finds it very difficult to withstand this psychological inclination. Had he had this will, he would not have been afflicted with conceit in the first place. This is the opposite of one who does not admire his deeds. He does not see them as being anything but as nothing, seeing his manners dismal and his conviction as being unworthy of being demonstrated to others; so, he does not admire himself, his attributes or deeds. Rather, he sees himself as not beautiful at all.

Such a person is in no position to make a show of himself and present his deeds to others. He is just as imām Khomeini, may his shade endure, has said, "The rotten and ugly merchandise is never displayed at the wholesale market." But if he sees himself and his deeds as presentable, he will be in a position to show off his beautiful deeds

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in their imagined beauty. Therefore, all the harms mentioned in these sheets are definitely counted among the harms of conceit as well. In the field of the harms of conceit, the greatest mentor of manners and spirituality, imām Khomeini, may his blessings last :forever, has made a statement, and here is a translation of its text

Wise Admonishment by Imam Khomeini

Let the conceited person know that this abomination is the seed of all other" abominations and the cause of many matters each one of which independently causes eternal annihilation and lodgment in torment. If he gets to know these harms properly, reviewing them carefully, studying the reports and legacies of the greatest Prophet and his Ahl al-Bayt, blessings of Allāh be with them all, he will surely see for himself that he must reform them and purge himself of this abomination, must uproot it from his inner self so he may not leave this world, God forbid, and go to the next carrying this .abomination with him

This is because once the worldly eye is closed, when one sees the power of the barzakh and judgment, he will see that the condition of those who committed great transgression is better than his own, for Allāh Almighty permitted them to dive in oceans of His mercy on account of their repentance, or due to their reliance on the favor of Allāh Almighty, while this poor person who saw himself as being independent, seeing inwardly that he had no need for the favor of Allāh

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Almighty, Allāh, praise to Him, held him to account through the scales of His justice, just as he wanted: Now He informs him that he never intended to truly worship the Truthful One, that all his acts of worship distanced him from the side of the Truthful One, all his deeds and conviction were not only nil and nothing but necessitated his perdition.

They were seeds for painful torment, a cause for being lodged into hell forever. God forbid that Allāh, praise to Him, should deal with anyone through His justice, for had this tablet been opened, none from the first generations and the last would have had a way to salvation. The imāms of guidance, peace be with them, and the great prophets used to hope, in their silent supplications to Allāh, for His favor, the most Praised One, and they were terrified by His justice and judgment.

The silent supplication by the elite ones to the Truthful One and to the Infallible Imāms" (peace be with them) are full of admission of dereliction, of incapacitation to truly adore. In one place, the one who is the very best of everything in existence declares the following: "We never knew You as You ought to be known, nor did we adore You as You ought to be adored." The condition of the rest of people is well known. Yes, they realized the greatness of the Truthful One, the Almighty, knowledgeable of the ratio of what is possible to what is mandatory.

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They knew that had they spent their entire lifespan in the life of this world adoring, being obedient, praising and glorifying Him, they would never have thanked Allāh for His blessings; so, how could they fully meet the requirements for praising Him and His attributes? They knew that nothing exists by itself, on its own, that life, ability, knowledge, power and all the other perfections are but the shadow of His perfection, the Almighty .that He is

What can be is poor, rather, purely poor, living in His shade, never being independent. How can there be any perfection for one by himself so he may display his perfection for sale? What power does he have so he may bargain over his work? The ones who are knowledgeable of Allāh, of the beauty of the Truthful One, of His Greatness, witnessed through vision and sight how imperfect they are, how incapable, how weighty their obligation is, while we, poor souls, are surrounded by the barrier of ignorance, !indifference and conceit

The barrier of inwardly and outwardly transgressions has veiled from our eyes, ears, minds, senses and the rest of faculties, so much so that we display our existence in contrast with the overwhelming authority of the Truthful One, the Almighty, claiming .independence, saying we are something

So, poor being who has no knowledge about his own self and about his ratio to the" Creator! O poor wretch who is unaware of his function compared to the One Who owns the kings! Such

ignorance, such lack of knowledge, is the cause of these sufferings. We have been afflicted by them because of the darkness and impurity. The destruction starts from its origin; the water is impure from its source; our eyes are too blind to see the deep knowledge. Our hearts are dead. Such is the reason for all the calamities. Yet we are not ...in the process to reform them, either

Lord! We plead to You to grant us success, acquaint us with our functions, grant us a " share of the lights of deep knowledge with which You filled the hearts of those who know and those of Your friends! Show us how Your power and authority overwhelm, how faulty we are, and enable us to understand the meaning of praising Allāh, the Lord of the Worlds. We are the poor ones, the unaware, who attribute all the praiseworthy attributes to the beings; do inform our hearts that not a single good attribute belongs initially to any :being, and show us the truth of this verse

Anything good (O man!) that happens to you is from Allāh, but whatever evil happens to" ,(you is from your (own) nafs (soul)" (Qur'ān, ۴:۷۹

and instill in our cruel hearts, the impure one, the blessed statement of Tawhīd, for we are the people of the barrier, of the dark, of shirk and hypocrisy. We love ourselves, we .admire them, so help us take the love for the nafs and for this world out of our hearts

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."Do make us loving Allāh, worshipping Him; surely You can do anything at all

This is the conclusion of the wise admonishment of imām Khomeini, may his blessings .last

Treating the Conceit Sickness

Be informed, dear one, that the physical doctors, while treating the physical sicknesses, exert their effort first to find out the cause of the sickness, trying to find out its causing germ. Once they have succeeded in this stage, they treat the sickness by eradicating the .germ with the use of a counter-germ. The patient will then recover his health and safety

Likewise, the scientists of manners and the spiritual doctors have also used this method in treating the spiritual and psychological sicknesses. Yes, there is a difference between this and that, which is: In the spiritual and psychological sicknesses, the knowledge of the cause of the sickness may itself be its treatment without the need to another process. In .other words, in the spiritual sicknesses, the cause of which is ignorance

There is no factor in causing the sickness save ignorance. In this case, if the causes and factors based on ignorance are identified, their structure will collapse and be replaced with knowledge. The sickness that was rendered to ignorance disappears, and there is no need for a practical treatment program. For example, when someone is afflicted with fear, and he fears isolation and the dark place, if this person directs his attention to the fact that the origin of his fear is his imagination and whim, and that there is

nothing outside his mind at all, and he does not make sure about the harm that he may receive by the outside dark and the isolation..., so if he realizes this meaning, this knowledge itself suffices in the dissipation of his fear from isolation and the dark without .the need for a practical treatment

The sickness, which is the subject of our discussion, I mean conceit, belongs also to this same type of spiritual sicknesses. If one does not entirely lean on ignorance, definitely an important portion of it is based on ignorance [i.e. he must leave no share for ignorance to dictate to him what he should or should not do]. It is hoped that this dangerous sickness will disappear by paying attention to what we have stated, to the practical reminders. If some of it remains in the soul, its owner derives divine niceties and is thus successful in eradicating the substance of this sickness completely, by the will of Allāh. In this field, we would like to briefly quote what some scholars of the hereafter have said so the benefit :may thereby be complete

As we stated before, the origin of conceit in man is his seeing the attribute of perfection in his nafs even if it is not a real perfection but an imagined one. It is known that perfection :is of many types and is divided from one standpoint into two kinds

First: The perfections that come to be through the choice of the individual and are

,optional

Second: The perfections that do not fall under his choice; rather, he is awarded them without his having had a say in their regard, such as beauty, lineage, and the like. Since conceit penetrates the heart mostly by way of optional perfections, we would like to :tackle them and say the following

If we suppose there is someone who is pious and God-fearing, and he performs many acts of adoration. If he admires them because these attributes and righteous deeds rest in him, being the one who undertakes them, believing that the origin of a righteous deed comes from Allāh, Praise to Him, and that He is the One Who bestows this attribute on him and enables him to undertake this deed, yet he, despite this [sound] belief, still feels conceited..., this is nothing but ignorance because this individual to whom reference is made is being utilized, and he has nothing to do with originating; so, how can he admire a ?deed with which he has nothing to do

But if he is conceited because this attribute or that deed comes out of him rather than anyone else, and it takes place through his choice, his ability, let him think about the ability, the will, his physical parts and the rest of causes that have a role in completing ?carrying out the good deed: Where did he get them from

If he gets to know that all this comes from Allāh, the most Praised One, from His boons which He granted him

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without his being requiring them, without a precedence or a means..., in this portrait, he ought to admire the Truthful One, the Almighty, and admire His generosity and favor which He bestowed upon him these boons without being worthy of them, preferring him over others, rather than admiring himself. In order to explain this minute Gnostic quest, :let us state an example

Let us suppose that a king reviews his troops. He looks at them and promotes one of them, not for a particular merit in him, nor beauty, nor service, to receive a promotion. This soldier ought to admire the favor of the king, his looking after him and preferring him .over others without his being worthy of it, and he ought not admire his own self

Yes, this soldier may admire himself and say, "The king is wise, fair, and does not do injustice to anyone, nor does he oppress, advance or delay except for a reason, nor does he grant a rank to someone nor extract it out of him without a cause. So, the king must have noticed in me a commendable innate attribute, so he thus preferred me over others ."for the promotion. Had it not been for that attribute, he would not have preferred me

But he has to remember, at the same time, who gave him this attribute, too. Is it one of the boons of the king, the rank with which he specifically gave him rather than anyone else? Or did someone else give

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it to him? If it is a gift from the king, too, he is not justified for admiring himself. If we suppose that the king had given him a horse as a gift, then he gave him a servant, too, he ought not feel conceited because just as he was not being worthy of possessing the horse, he likewise did not deserve to get the servant.

Likewise, there is no difference between the king giving him the horse and the servant together and giving him the horse first then the servant. If all comes from him, this recipient ought to admire the king and his generosity unless we suppose he obtained the horse, for example, on his own and the king gave him the servant specifically. But this supposition applies to great men, to worldly kings.

As regarding the King of Kings, the originator of existence and of its requirements and consequences, such as His generosity and outgiving, the only One Who originates the being and the attribute..., such a supposition does not hold any water at all. This is so because if one, for example, is enabled to admire, and conceit finds its way to him from the venue that Allāh, the most Praised One, was the One Who enabled him to undertake such adoration, but he thinks that this ability is due to his love for Him, that such love is the reason for success of this adoration..., yet in this case he must ask himself this question:

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?Who cast this love in my heart

The soul will definitely answer him saying, "Surely it is Allāh Who honored me with this love." So, let him tell himself that both the love and the adoration are blessings from Allāh which He gave him without being worthy of them. So, your admiration must be of His generosity and open-handedness, for He has blessed you with existence, granted you your attributes, prepared for you the means to undertake acts of righteousness...; therefore, there is no sense for a worshipper to admire his worship, nor a scholar to admire his knowledge, nor a beautiful person to admire his beauty, nor a wealthy person to admire his wealth, for all these are due to the favor of Allāh Almighty, and their recipient is the object of the outpouring favors and generosity of Allāh. The individual .himself coming into being is also a sign of His generosity and favor

Dear kind reader: You may not have arrived at the root of the pursuit, although this pursuit is apt to win your acceptance, but there may be some insinuation in the heart that .stops one from believing in it

Unless there is belief in something, the mere knowing of it does not bear much impact. We have already stated, while discussing pretension, that conviction is not the same as knowledge. Some people may have knowledge, but since they have no conviction about what they do, this knowledge does not benefit them in anything. The cursed Eblis

,had the knowledge about the beginning and the return, so he said

,(You created me from fire..." (Qur'ān, ۷:۱۲"

,(Grant me a respite till the Day they are raised up" (Qur'ān, ۷:۱۴"

but since he had no conviction in what he knew, he got out of the band of believers and :entered into that of the unbelievers as the Holy Qur'ān clearly states

.(he refused and was haughty; he was of those who reject faith" (Qur'ān, ۲:۳۴..."

Attention ought to be given to the phrase "... and was of those who reject faith". Refusal and haughtiness about prostrating to Adam were the result of his being an already rejecter of the faith in the past. It is not just because he merely did not prostrate to Adam .that he became a rejecter of the faith

Anyhow, we submit a query in order to remove the hissing from the heart and hope after getting the answer for this question that the cursed Satan will lose hope and the heart will :be ready for the light of conviction to shine in it. The question is this

Although we know that success and blessings are from Allāh, how can we ignore our good deeds which we did and for which we anticipate to be rewarded? Had they not been our own doing, we would not have hoped for rewards for them because we do not expect to be rewarded for deeds done by others. So, if the deeds are not truly from us, what

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is this reward which Allāh, Praised is He, promised to grant us? And if the deeds are ours, ?how can we ignore them and not admire them

This question has two answers: a real answer and a compromising one. The real answer is that since realizing it is based on witnessing those who have hearts and holding counsel with those who are adorned with good conduct and not specifically according to the understanding of most people, we do not mention it and contend ourselves with the second answer: Let us suppose that your claim about your deed is accurate, that you did the deed through your ability, although your very existence and the requirements to maintain your existence all come from Allāh, the most Praised One, yet, at the same time, had you not been in existence, your deed, will and ability would not have existed, either, nor would this deed have been done. Thereupon, if the deed comes as a result of your ability, such ability is the key to doing this deed, and this key is in the hands of Allāh .Almighty

Let us suppose the world's treasures are placed in a secure fort and its keys are in the hands of the guard. If we try for thousands of years to enter the fort by climbing over its wall, or find a way to get inside it, you will not be able to do that, nor can you fare with one dinar of the funds deposited in it. But

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if the guard gives you the key and grants you authority over the funds and precious stones in the fort, you will easily be able to take from them whatever you wish. Be fair and answer this question: Will you admire the guard who gave you this key, or will you admire ?stretching your hand and taking the money and the jewels from the safe

There is no doubt that you see it as a blessing from the guard and a boon on you, and you do not see your taking the money as having any credit for yourself because all the role in the guard giving you the key lied in his own presence there and then. He was present, so he gave you the key. If Allāh, Praise to Him, grants the ability in you and gives you power over your will, mobilizing the incentives and prompting you, removing the obstacles and diversions from your path and facilitating for you the doing of the deed…, is it not odd if you overlook the admiration of the One Who gave you all these things and not admire His presence, favor and generosity and admire, thus, the little motion that we suppose comes ?!out of you

So, open your heart's eyes, my dear one, observe the One Who really causes things, and witness with piercing eyes the very cause. Do not be deceived by Satan and by the nafs, for they both are your enemies. Their ability is only to make

your false beliefs, contemptible characteristics and wrongdoings look good in your eyes. Instead of lowering your head with these matters and making you feel shy about them, .they force you to admire them

So, how can you feel secure and be indifferent if they decorate your acts of worship for you and push you towards being proud of them till all your acts of worship are rendered ?!void, rendering your deeds in Sijjeen after you hoped it would be in 'Illiyyeen

Dear one, consider the conditions of those who are loved by and close to Allāh, Praise to Him, and you will see how they used to see themselves as bankrupt of good deeds towards Allāh, Praise to Him. The Commander of the Faithful, Ali (ع), wrote the following verse of poetry on the shroud of Salman, despite his acts of adoration, asceticism and the :arrival at the tenth degree of conviction

I am coming to the Generous One without rations

.Of good deeds and the heart is sound

One of the great men used to say the following whenever a storm blew out or saw thunder and lightning in the sky: "No ill befalls people except it is on my own account; had ."Atā' died, people would have been relieved

After his return from `Arafāt, one of these great men was asked how he saw the standing there. He said, "I was hopeful they would all receive mercy had I only not been ."among them

So, dear one, beware lest you should doubt these Islamic

branches of knowledge which are supported by verses and narratives relying on witnesses about those who ruled over their hearts, for it [conceit] is the greatest veil against realizing the truth. This sickness, conceit, when coupled with this veil, God forbid, .will be chronic and incurable

Yes, my dear one, Allāh Almighty fares with the hearts of His servants, and they have conditions with which we are not familiar. We, the poor ones who are unaware of all matters, never realize the state of submission in the heart of the friends of Allāh in all our lifetime, not even for a moment, and we are justified if we do not see them because they are the outcome of the manifestation of the Greatness of the Truthful One, the most Exalted One, to the heart. It is then that the mountain of egotism and selfishness is :crushed

.(When his Lord manifested His glory on the mount, He made it like dust" (Qur'ān, ٧:١۴٣"

If the power of truth rests in a heart and takes its seat in it, there will be no effect in that :heart for seeing the nafs and admiring it

When kings enter a town, they ruin it, and make the noblest of its people the meanest"" .((Qur'ān, ٢٧:٣۴

We, the folks who are immersed in desires and afflicted with the wishes of the nafs, have .no acquaintance with such worlds

So, Praise be to Allāh! What a difference it is between the pious hearts and submissive ,[souls [and others

between the individuals who are drowned in conceit and haughtiness, so much so that if one of them is insulted, or taken lightly, or harmed, he will think it far-fetched that Allāh, Praise to Him, will include the doer in His forgiveness, nor does he doubt that he became cursed by Allāh because of this insult. This is so although if someone harmed a Muslim, he .would not denounce it as such and hope for Allāh's forgiveness for his sin

This is due to holding himself great, to his admiration of his own self, which is ignorance, the combination of conceit, pride and taking Allāh lightly. Ignorance, foolishness and stupidity may cause some people to be defiant and say, "You will see what will happen to ."him because of what he did to me

If he is accidentally afflicted with a setback, he renders it to his own self and claim it is due to his own status of goodness, and that Allāh Almighty wanted thus to cure his ailment, please his conscience and seek revenge on his behalf although this poor person sees classes of the unbelievers cursing Allāh and the Messenger and knows a group that harmed the prophets, peace be with them. Some beat those prophets and others killed .them

Yet, despite all of this, Allāh gave a respite to most of them and did not outright punish them for their actions in the life of this world, nor did He torment them on their account. ,Rather

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some of them may have believed, so no harm touched them, neither in the life of this world nor in the hereafter. Even Wahshi, the man who killed Hamzah, the master of martyrs, the one [uncle] who was the dearest to the Messenger of Allāh (ص), harming his revered heart, was enabled to repent and to believe.

But this ignorant conceited person claims he is dearer to Allāh than the Messenger of Allāh (ص), and insulting him is more serious than killing the master of martyrs Hamzah, for Allāh, Praise to Him, sought revenge on his behalf against those who insulted him while not seeking revenge against the killers of prophets. He thus thinks he has a greater status with Allāh than that of His prophets.

In thus admiring himself and being conceited, he may have incurred the contempt of Allāh while being unaware of his own annihilation. He and his deeds are in Sijjeen. One who commits more sins than others may be nearer to Allāh Almighty than he is according to the sacred narrative in Al-Kāfi from Abū Abdullāh (ع) who says, "Allāh knows that sins are better for the believer than conceit. Had it not been so, He would not have afflicted a believer with a sin at all."

Great Benefit Provided by Khomeini in Treating Conceit:

We would like to conclude this research with something useful provided to us by our greatest mentor, imām Khomeini, may his blessings last, in the field of treating the conceit sickness. It is hoped that those who seek

it will arrive at the anticipated result with precision according to the useful statement of our mentor and of those stated by great scholars of ethics, and surely Allāh grants success and helps.

Imām Khomeini, may his shade last, says the following: "Be informed that the contemptible sin of conceit is created by loving the nafs. This is so because man by nature loves it, and loving the nafs is the source of every human sin and the origin of all moral vices. Because of this love, man sees his insignificant deeds as looking great in his eyes, seeing himself as a benevolent person when doing these deeds and one of those who enjoy a special status with the Truthful One, the Almighty.

He sees himself, because of these insignificant deeds, worthy of praise and lauding. His ugly deeds may be decorated for him. When he sees others doing better and greater deeds than his own, he is not concerned about them. He often interprets people's good deeds in a bad way while interpreting his ugly deeds and wrongdoings as good according to a level of interpretation. He thus thinks ill of Allāh's manner while thinking well of his own self.

He, through this love, sees himself as crediting the Truthful One, the Almighty, obligating Him to be merciful to him through an insignificant deed which is mixed with a thousand filths and with everything that distances one from his Lord. We ought to think for a short while of the

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good deeds and the acts of adoration which come out of us in order to see if we deserve to be praised and lauded on their account and be worthy of rewards and mercy, or should we be blamed, penalized and receive the wrath on their account?

If the Truthful One burnt us with the fire of His subduing and wrath because of these deeds which we consider to be good, it would have been truthful and just.

"I now would like to seek your own judgment, reader, with regard to the question which I am going to submit to you and ask you to confirm, after thinking and considering with the eyes of fairness; the question is:

"Had the glorious Prophet, peace of Allāh be with him and his progeny, who is truthful and trustworthy, informed you that if you worshipped Allāh Almighty and obeyed His commandments as long as you live, abandoning illicit desires and wishes throughout your life, or if you disobeyed His commandments all your life and acted according to the dictates of your own self and illicit desires, it will not make a difference in the degrees of your hereafter and you will be saved anyhow and enter Paradise and be secure against the torment without a difference between your performance of the prayers or your committing adultery, but the pleasure of Allāh Almighty is in keeping yourself busy worshipping Him, praising and lauding Him, abandoning your illicit desires and inclinations in this world, and that Allāh,

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Praised is He, does not grant you rewards in exchange for this action in the first place..., will you be in this supposition among the sinners, or would you be among those who ?adore

Would you abandon the illicit desires and deprive yourself of pleasures in order to earn His Pleasure, the most Praised One, and out of your love for Him, or would you not? Would you be regular in doing what is commendable, in observing Friday congregational prayers, mass acts of worship, or would you immerse yourself in illicit desires, merriment, .play, singing, etc.? Answer while eying equity and without pretending

As for me, I can tell you about myself and about those who are like me. We used to be in" that condition, among the people of transgression, leaving acts of obedience behind our backs, following our illicit desires, and the result of all of our deeds was for the sake of !personal pleasures and to look after the stomach and private part

We were those with bellies, worshippers of their desires. But we abandoned such pleasures for the sake of a much greater pleasure. Our full attention and hopes rested on making the desires easily accessible to us. The prayers, which are the ascending ladder to nearness to Allāh, we prayed so we could be close to the women of Paradise and not connected to nearness to the Truly Almighty nor connected to obedience to the command of Allāh: The prayer was distant by thousands of parasangs

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from Allāh, Praise to Him.

"O poor soul ignorant of the divine knowledge who knows nothing but taking care of your desire and anger! And you, holy man, who is regular in performing his rituals and optional acts of worship as well as obligations, who abandons what is hated and prohibitive, who is adorned with good manners and who avoids bad conduct!

Weigh your deeds with the scales of equity so you may see that all these deeds to reach the selfish desires, to sit on a bench of emeralds, to sleep with the huris having large lovely eyes, to wear silk and brocade, to live in high mansions and to achieve the wishes! Can all these deeds, which are all for the sake of worshipping and loving the self, be attributed to Allāh and to the worship of the Truthful One?

What is the difference between you and the one who works for a wage? If the worker tells his boss that he has done his job purely for his own sake, you will call him a liar. Are you not a liar when you say that your prayers are for seeking nearness to Allāh or to be close to the women of Paradise and achieve what you desire? Let me say the following frankly: All our acts of worship, in the eyes of those who know Allāh and who are friends of Allāh, are themselves major transgressions.

"So, poor soul, you act before the Truthful One, the most Great, and

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before His angels who are close to Him contrarily to the pleasure of the Almighty, while adoration is the ascension ladder for nearness to Him which is performed by the nafs that quite often commands the doing of wrongdoing and by Satan while, at the same time, you have no shame but lie in every act of worship many times before the Almighty and the !angels close to Him

You invent claims, thinking you are doing Him a favor, feeling proud of what you are doing, acting like a spoiled child, having no shame! What is the difference between my worship and yours coupled with the transgressions of the transgressors the strongest of which is pretension, for pretension is shirk; its ugliness and seriousness are due to worship not done for the sake of the Almighty. All our acts of worship are shirk, and there is no tint of loyalty and sincerity in them. Rather, the pleasure of Allāh Almighty does not .find its way to them due also to shirk

Rather, they are for the sake of attaining pleasures, for satisfying the stomach and the private part. So, dear one, a prayer service aiming at achieving the love of a woman, be she one of the women of this life or of the hereafter, is not for the sake of Allāh. A prayer service undertaken for the sake of reaching the hopes of this life or the aspirations of the hereafter is not connected with Allāh; so, why such

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flirtation and indulgence?! You look down at the servants of Allāh, thinking that you are one of those chosen by the Truthful One!

O poor soul! You, through such a prayer service deserves to be tormented and are worthy of a chain the length of which is seventy yards. So, why do you see yourself as having credit with Allāh, preparing for yourself through this flirtation and conceit an additional torment? You are supposed to perform the deeds which you are ordered to perform and pay attention to their being for the sake of Allāh. Be informed that Allāh Almighty permits you to enter Paradise through His favor and mercy.

The most Praised One has lightened some shirk for His servants due to their weakness, throwing on them the covering veil through His forgiveness. Do not violate the sanctity of this covering, and leave the covering of forgiveness of the Truthful One placed on the bad deeds which we called "acts of worship" for, God forbid, if the pages are turned and the pages of justice are brought, the stink of our worship will be no less than that of our transgressions, the sins of transgressors.

Thiqatul-Islam [the one trusted by the Muslims], al-Kulaini, has narrated in Al-Kāfi," saying, "Allāh, (ص) who cites the Messenger of Allāh (ع) through isnād to Imām al-Sādiq the most Exalted and Great, said to Dawud [David]: 'Give the glad tidings to the sinners and warn the truthful ones.' Dawud said, 'How do I give glad

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'?tidings to the sinners and warn the truthful ones

The Almighty said, 'O Dawud! Give the glad tiding to the sinners that I accept the repentance and forgive the sin, and warn the truthful ones against admiring their deeds, for I do not let a servant of Mine stand for judgment except that he perishes.'" So, since the truthful ones perish in the process of the judgment, although they are pure of sins ?!and transgressions, what I can say, and what can you

All this is as such if our deeds and yours are indicative of purely worldly pretension which" is one of the abominations and prohibitions, and seldom does it coincide that we do a good deed which is free of pretension and hypocrisy. Leave this subject alone; we shall .not talk about it

Now, if there is room for conceit, flirtation and indulgence, do it. And if fairness places" one in a position where he feels ashamed, lowering his head, admitting his shortcoming, then seek Allāh's forgiveness and repent to Him with seriousness. In all reality clear each act of worship which you undertake from the lies which you pronounced in the presence of the Truthful One, the most Exalted, and about the titles which you bestowed upon .yourself without any right

Should you not repent about saying, while facing the Truthful One, the most Exalted One, prior to performing your prayer, "I have directed my face towards the One Who created the heavens and the earth, submissive, believing, and

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I am not among the polytheist; surely my prayers, asceticism, life and death are for the sake of Allāh, Lord of the Worlds"?

Did you really submit your heart to the One Who created the heavens and the earth? Are you really a Muslim? Are you pure of shirk? Are your prayers, adoration, life and death for the sake of Allāh? Should you not feel ashamed when you say in your prayer, "Praise to Allāh, the Lord of the Worlds"? Do you really see all praise being due to the Truthful One, the Almighty, or do you see it fitting His servants, even praise due for the enemies of Allāh?

Is this not lying when you say, "Praise to Allāh, the Lord of the Worlds", although you fix lordship in this world for others? Is repentance not required when you say, "Thee do we worship, and from Thee do we seek help"? Do you worship Allāh, or do you really worship your appetite for food and lust for sex? Do you seek Allāh or do you want the huris with large lovely eyes? Do you really seek help only from Allāh, and does every matter in your eyes seem to be rendered to only Allāh? Is your pursuit and goal is Allāh when you go to visit the House of Allāh? Is your pursuit and goal the Owner of the House?

And does your heart act upon the statement of the poet who says, "It is not love for the

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abodes that occupies my heart [but it is the love for those that live therein]"? Do you seek Allāh? Do you seek the manifestations of the Greatness and Beauty of the Truthful One? ?Do you hold commemorative gatherings for the sake of the master of the oppressed

Do you beat your chest and head for his sake, or is it to reach your wealth and wishes, and the catalyst for your holding commemorative gatherings is the craving of the stomach? What pushes you towards the congregational prayers is the craving for the sexual intercourse [with the huris of Paradise], and what prompts you to keep you busy .with the rituals and acts of adoration is love for your own self

Brother! Discern the traps of the nafs and of Satan, and be informed that Satan does not" let you undertake a single sincere act [of worship], and these insincere deeds which were accepted by Allāh, Glory to Him, only out of His favor, Satan does not let you get them to reach home; so, he fares with you, and with them, rendering them as nil through conceit .and indulgence

Thus, this gain, too, passes you by, for you have distanced yourself from Allāh and from His Pleasure, and you did not reach Paradise or the huris with large lovely eyes. This is not .all. You became eternally lodged in the torment, tortured in the subduing fire of Allāh

Did you claim that through these worn out deeds, the stinking and shaky

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ones, the ones mixed with pretension and desire for fame, with a thousand calamities each one of which bans the acceptance of your deeds, that you indeed have done Allāh ?Almighty a favor, or you joined the company of those who love or who are loved

O poor soul! Who is unaware of the condition of those who [truly] love, and the wretch who is ignorant of the hearts of the lovers wherein fire burns, the poor soul that is unaware of the burning of the sincere ones, of the noor of their deeds…, did you think ?that their deeds, too, were like my deeds and ours

as having distinguished (ع) Did you imagine the prayers of the Commander of the Faithful itself from our prayers because a phrase in it was recited with prolongation or the recitation was more accurate than ours, or the bowing and prostrating were longer, or the praises and pleas were more numerous than ours, or that he, peace be with him, distinguished himself from us by praying during every night many prostrations, or that the silent supplication [munajat] of the master of those who prostrate was like mine and yours, and that he shed his tears and cried for the sake of the huris with large lovely eyes ?!and for the plums and pomegranates of Paradise

By their lives, and it surely is a great oath, if all humans pretended and wanted to utter a" single "La ilaha illa Allāh!" [There is no god except

they would ,(ع) Allāh] a single time just it was uttered by the Commander of the Faithful never be able to do that. So, woe unto me for thus knowing the status of the authority of !Ali, peace be with him

that had the angels close to Allāh and the (ع) I swear by the status of Ali ibn Abū Talib messengers, aside from the Seal of Messengers, who is the master of Ali and of everyone else, that had they wanted to make a single takbīr like that of Ali, they would never be .able to do it; the condition of their hearts is known only by themselves

.So, dear one! Lessen your claim that you love Allāh"

O you man of knowledge, the ascetic one, the judge, the one who performs jihad, who" subjects his heart to exercise, the faqīh, the believer, the holy one! O poor souls, the wretches who are afflicted by the traps and desires of the nafs! O helpless folks who are afflicted by the hopes, wishes and love for their own selves! Since we all are incapable, and we all worship while being distant by many parasangs from sincerity and from loving Allāh..., do not think well of yourselves, and do not act like the spoiled ones, and ask your .hearts if they truly seek Allāh or seek their own selves

Does the heart believe in the Unity of Allāh and seek the One and Only God, or is it ,polytheistic? What is this conceit

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and what is the meaning of such pointing out to the deeds? If the value of a good deed, taking for granted it is complete in all its parts and conditions and is free of pretension, shirk, conceit and all destructive elements, is to reach the satisfying of the craving of the stomach and of the private part, what value is attached to it, since all these deeds are ?shown to the angels of Allāh

So, they have to be hidden from the visions [of humans]. These deeds are among the ugly and calamitous ones. One must be ashamed of them and must cover them up. Lord! We seek refuge with You, we the poor ones, from the mischief of Satan, the evil of Satan and the evil-insinuating self [nafs]. Do protect us, Lord, from their traps by the status with You reserved for Muhammad and the Progeny of Muhammad, Allāh blesses him and his ."Progeny

This is the end of his statement, may his shadow prolong, about those who are conceited .and who brag about their good deeds

Inclusive Statement by Imam-Al-Sadiq

We would like to beautify this dissertation with an inclusive statement by Imām al-Sādiq :so its seal may be musk (ع)

:is quoted as having said the following (ع) In Misbāh al-Sharī`a, Imām al-Sādiq

I am surprised, utterly surprised, about one who admires his deed while not knowing" how it will be sealed for him. One who admires himself and his deed strays from the path of guidance and claims what does not belong

to him. One who makes a false claim is a liar even if his claim is hidden [not articulated], even if he lives long, for the first that a conceited person undergoes is being stripped of that which he admired so he would know that he is helplessly poor, so he may testify against his own self, so the argument against him will be stronger, just as it was done to Eblis. Conceit is a seed loving which is apostasy; its ground is hypocrisy, its water is oppression, its branches are ignorance, its leaves are misguidance, its fruit is a curse and an everlasting abode in the Fire. So, one who opts to be conceited sows the seeds of disbelief, plants hypocrisy, and it has to bear fruit."

Surely the servant of Allāh has said the truth.

All Praise belongs to Allāh in the beginning and in the end; His is the favor manifestly and innately.

These pages have been written by the one who is in need of the mercy of Allāh: Sayyid Ahmed al-Fahri.

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About center

In the name of Allah

هَلْيَسْتَوِيالَّذِينَيَعْلَمُونَوَالَّذِينَلَايَعْلَمُونَ

?Are those who know equal to those who do not know

al-Zumar: ۹

:Introduction

Ghaemiyeh Computer Research Institute of Isfahan, from ۲۰۰۷, under the authority of Ayatollah Haj SayyedHasanFaqihImami (God blesses his soul), by sincere and daily efforts of university and seminary elites and sophisticated groups began its activities in .religious, cultural and scientific fields

:Manifesto

Ghaemiyeh Computer Research Institute of Isfahan in order to facilitate and accelerate the accessibility of researchers to the books and tools of research, in the field of Islamic science, and regarding the multiplicity and dispersion of active centers in this field and numerous and inaccessible sources by a mere scientific intention and far from any kind of social, political, tribal and personal prejudices and currents, based on performing a project in the shape of (management of produced and published works from all Shia centers) tries to provide a rich and free collection of books and research papers for the experts, and helpful contents and discussions for the educated generation and all classes .of people interested in reading, with various formats in the cyberspace

:Our Goals are

(propagating the culture and teachings of Thaqalayn (Quran and Ahlulbayt p.b.u.t-

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replacing useful contents with useless ones in the cellphones, tablets and computers-

providing services for seminary and university researchers-

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mentioning the sources-

.It's obvious that all the responsibilities are due to the author

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:Appreciation

We would appreciate the centers, institutes, publications, authors and all honorable .friends who contributed their help and data to us to reach the holy goal we follow

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